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The Week

MR. Charles E. Hughes will apparently need all his great abilities to get away from Havana without suffering from a defeat or a check at the hands of three or four rebellious Spanish-American states. Argentina, Mexico, Salvador and some others insist upon writing into the international law of the western hemisphere an absolute protection of the small sovereign state against armed invasion. Under the proposed rule the government of the United States could not intervene, say, in Nicaragua, without declaring war, and this necessity might, from the point of view of the State Department, be extremely inconvenient. Its spokesmen in Havana, consequently, wish to establish a right of intervention, provided the small state ignores its responsibilities to the nationals of other states. Now it is reasonable to insist that even a sovereign state should not be the exclusive judge of its own acts when those acts involve the welfare of the citizens of other states, but what is needed in that event is some form of judicial procedure and execution rather than an arbitrary assertion of power by the state which considers itself aggrieved. The only reason why the present American intervention in Nicaragua is classed as a police affair rather than war is that Nicaragua is a pitifully small nation as compared to the United States. The State Department is not justified in assuming that the unchecked assertion of its own policy by forcible intervention is legally valid, and that all opposition thereto is rebellion, or piracy, or some other form of lawless behavior. The existence of law assumes the existence of some legal process to ascertain the facts and apply the rule.

SURELY the only honorable and ultimately satisfactory course for the government of the United States to pursue is to propose a Pan-American Court which will have in certain conditions the power to decide whether and how far intervention is necessary. Thanks to its overwhelming physical preponderance, the United States may be able for the present to assert the right of interpreting for itself some accepted rule of intervention, but obviously as the Spanish-American countries increase in wealth, population and power, it cannot continue to be the sole judge of its own acts when those acts involve the forcible coercion of its Spanish-American associates. The latter are bound in the long run to combine for joint protection, and the sooner they begin to combine and assert themselves the better. If the government of the United States, through Mr. Hughes, insists that whenever it feels justified in intervention, its decision should be legally valid and should operate to outlaw its opponents, there is obviously only one thing for states like Argentina and Mexico to do. They can assert that as a matter of national policy they will not recognize the legal respectability of any intervention by the United States until it is justified by an international tribunal. In any particular case they may not be able to make their protest effective. Mexico is powerless to act when the United States intervenes in Nicaragua as the United States would act if Mexico intervened in Nicaragua. But the refusal of Argentina, Mexico and the other recalcitrant states to consent to the pretensions of the United States would at least effectively prevent those pretensions from being legalized by general recogni-

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tion or explicit consent. The right to intervene would in that event remain legally what it actually is—viz., an assertion of power.

IT is cheering news that Hoover is to begin an open and aggressive campaign for delegates in at least thirteen direct-primary states. His strategic position forces such a campaign upon him. The politicians are against him. Although most of the lesser business men are for him, most of the larger business men are all against him or are afraid of him. If his opponents can prevent his nomination on the first few ballots, they can get control of the convention and start a successful intrigue to name some more manageable candidate. His only chance is to enter the convention either with a majority of the delegates or something like a majority, and he ought to take the chance with some confidence. Except in the Lowden or Norris states, his opponents stand for nothing except an attempt to vindicate the prestige of the local politician. How good his chance is must remain for the present a doubtful guess. Mr. Hoover has, so far as we know, never in his life been elected to any office in the gift of the American people. How strongly he will appeal to the ordinary voter is an unknown quantity.

WE are glad to note that the power lobby has lost the first two engagements in its winter campaign in Washington. The Walsh resolution for an investigation of the holding companies and other interstate aspects of the problem was nearly buried by being referred to the Federal Trade Commission—the vote of the Senate Interstate Commerce Committee on this motion being nine to nine. It then was reported favorably to the Senate, which probably will pass it. Interest now centers on the appointments which Vice-President Dawes will make to the investigating committee. He can hardly pass over Senator Walsh, the author of the resolution, but it is rumored that he will refuse to appoint Senator Couzens and others who would be extremely useful in the investigation. The second defeat for the power interests was the favorable report on the unaltered Swing-Johnson bill for Boulder Dam, with a definite time set for voting on the calendar, so that it will be more difficult to postpone it until the last days of the session and then to kill it by a filibuster, as was done last year. The period before the vote will enable another attempt to bring together in an interstate compact the seven states directly concerned. Their agreement has been rendered more likely by a letter from Secretary Work to the recalcitrants—Arizona and Nevada—saying that if their claim to the right to levy taxes or contributions on such a federal project is sustained, it will mean the end of all reclamation projects at federal expense. It is to be hoped that the states will seize this last-minute opportunity to come to an agreement.

BRIAND, in a recent speech to the French Chamber, spoke as if he had definite assurances that a final settlement of the reparations and war-debt problem were in sight. Continued occupation of the Rhineland, he pointed out, was not necessary in the interest of national defense in view of the Locarno agreements, but was of value in view of the incompleted reparations program. But he was certain that reparations would be out of the way before long. This statement apparently has some connection with Reparation-Agent S. Parker Gilbert's report calling attention to the fact that the total of reparations, left untouched by the Dawes Plan, ought to be fixed, and with his subsequent visit to Paris and conference with Poincaré. Nothing has been done about the total of the debt since the London conference, before the adoption of the Dawes Plan, enunciated its formula for the A, B, and C series of bonds. At the time, informed economists stated that at least the C series could never be redeemed, and it has since come to be believed that the total of the proposed A and B issues is too large. Technically, however, France may still adhere to this decision of the Allies as the last official word on the subject. The question is, how that total may be revised downward.

THE formula for a final payment will undoubtedly be the old suggestion of an issue by Germany of bonds, for sale to private investors, from the proceeds of which she will pay the Allied claims. How large must this bond issue be? That depends upon how much France can be persuaded to reduce her claim. As bargaining considerations she has her Rhineland occupation, and her wish for a reduction of her debt obligations to the United States. If we will consent sufficiently to reduce her payments, she will consent to reduce Germany's. How small must the bond issue be? That depends upon the judgment of the American and British bankers and investors concerning Germany's ability to transfer interest payments across her borders. Light will be thrown on this question when, in September of this year, the maximum payments under the Dawes program begin. The international loan cannot well be larger than the capitalized value of Germany's present capacity and willingness to pay and to transfer payment. France is counting upon the American interest in private investments in Germany to press for a settlement of reparations, so that these private holdings will be secure and profitable. It may be that she has already received assurances that our government will deal generously with her, if she will be reasonable with Germany.

SENATOR Walsh's renewed inquiry into the oil frauds of the Harding administration has definitely established the fact that Secretary Fall received $233,000 from the profits of the improvised Continental Trading Company. Since this was the means by which the Teapot Dome enterprise was

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forwarded, the Senate committee is naturally eager to know what became of the $2,000,000 of profits of that company not yet accounted for. Col. Robert W. Stewart, Chairman of the Standard Oil Company of Indiana, subpœnaed to testify on this matter, refused to tell what he knew, saying that it was none of the committee's business. Called to the bar of the Senate to be arraigned for contempt, he evaded the action by habeas corpus proceedings. The Senate is wise in engaging George W. Wickersham to represent it in these proceedings. But, to a naïve mind, it is strange that so eminent a business executive as Colonel Stewart should not demand to clear up the affair by telling everything. If he is not involved himself, as he says, his refusal to testify looks as if he were trying to shield someone else. Colonel Stewart apparently believes it more important to protect wrong-doing, even if it is necessary to defy the Senate to do so, than to aid the representatives of the people in investigating an extraordinarily shady affair. This, in itself, is a more pregnant commentary on the attitude toward public morality of such business interests as Colonel Stewart typifies than anything the Senate might discover.

THE New Republic has received the following telegram:

> I note with interest an editorial in your issue of February 1 page 263 referring to merchant marine. Are you prepared to prove that you are not subsidized by Britain? If not, how do you get that way?
>
> WILDER.

Reference to the editorial in question reveals that it mentions the various interests now concerned in shipping legislation, including the established concerns who want the government out of the business because of the surplus of tonnage, those interested in ship-building and promoting new ventures who want government loans and subsidies, exporters and importers who want existing routes continued by the government even at a loss, and the navy. It went on to point out that, aside from considerations of defense, there was a good deal to be said for using the most efficient ships, no matter what flag they fly. "If we are to abolish *laissez-faire* in shipping, we ought to make a thorough job of it, and subsidize in the interest of an integrated national economy, rather than in the interest of some group of private traders or ship-builders." This last sentence gives us the key to the identity of the mysterious "Wilder." We assume that he is Lawrence R. Wilder, connected with the ship-building division of the American Brown-Boveri Company, which is promoting a line of express steamships to be built largely on government money at a low rate of interest, and to be subsidized by special mail contracts. We are prepared to prove that we are not subsidized by Britain, but it is hardly necessary to do so at Mr. Wilder's request.

ONE strange aspect of "economy" is the hamstringing of the Federal Power Commission, which issues licenses for the use of water power under the law, and is supposed to protect the public in doing so. In a letter to Chairman Parker of the House Committee on Interstate and Foreign Commerce, the Commission says, "The Commission has proceeded with the issuance of licenses in the annual expectation that it would be given the means to exercise adequate supervision over them. This has not been given, and it is a serious question whether the Commission ought not to cease the issuance of licenses altogether until it is in a better position to safeguard the public interests in their issuance." Through lack of personnel, it cannot thoroughly audit the books of the licensees to determine the correctness of their plant-investment accounts, on which their returns are supposed to be based, or of their earnings. "Such audits as the Commission with its limited force has been able to make have disclosed in several instances what appears to be overcharging of investment accounts. . . . Millions of dollars may be improperly entered in fixed capital accounts of its licensees." This loss to the public is incurred at no saving to the government, since the receipts of the Commission from the licensees "are ample to provide for adequate administration without drawing a dollar from the revenues of the United States." What is needed is simply legislation authorizing the employment of the needed personnel. Someone ought loudly to ask the question, Why and in whose interest does Congress fail to pass this law?

NONE of the present activities of the American Labor movement is more praiseworthy than its campaign against the abuse of injunctions in labor disputes. This is an old grievance, but the practice of issuing injunctions to aid employers in their struggles with organized labor has now developed so many dangerous ramifications and precedents that, as we have several times said in leading editorials, the issue is crucial. The practical question is, how the abuse can best be fought. First, of course, by agitation and public education, showing the injustice and social undesirability of the abuse. Labor is often inclined to support legislative remedies; these may be useful, especially as part of the agitation, but we hardly expect them to be wholly efficacious. More important is it so to fight injunction cases in the courts, by presenting the economic and social facts which condition them, that judges may be educated and favorable precedents established. This line has been followed in the New York Interborough case. It is the line of attack which finally brought immunity under the anti-trust laws to such combinations as United States Steel. In the long run, the courts will pursue what they believe to be good policy. And, though all else fails, indomitable persistence on the economic field of action will finally demonstrate the futility of the injunction.

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The Presidential Campaign—Observations and Guesses

THE culminating phase of the process of nominating the party candidates for the presidency is about to begin. After a few weeks the results of the state primaries and conventions will drip down one by one, and observers can apply a trustworthy public test of the relative strength of the several candidates. The party voters are not as yet much aroused by the competitions among the several candidates. From the voter's point of view it looks like a boxing exhibition with soft gloves. The thing which the Democratic and Republican machines in the several states are most anxious to avoid is a controversial appeal to the members of the party. They would all like to send to the national conventions uninstructed delegations, but if local conditions compel them to hold direct primaries and to pledge the delegates to one or another candidate, the party management, rather than the voters, must, so far as possible, issue the instructions. In New Jersey the Edge machine converted itself to Hoover rather than permit Arthur Whitney to ask Republicans whether they wanted Hoover or not. In New York, the State Committee managed to stifle a similar revolt before it got fairly started. In Ohio, Senator Willis accuses ex-Senator Burton of foul treachery for his dastardly conduct in trying to give other Republican voters something to say about their presidential candidate. The professional politicians are playing the game of president-making according to their own rules, in the hope eventually of nominating and electing a Republican candidate as accommodating as the late Warren G. Harding.

Some months ago the New Republic called attention to the anomalous aspects of this pre-convention campaign. While there are probably quite as many candidates in the field as usual, and while presumably they disagree sharply about the way in which they would like to govern the country, they are all reluctant to let the American people into the secret of how they propose to behave as President. Lowden, among the Republicans, does, it is true, apparently nail the flag of agrarian insurgency to his masthead, but there is more gesture than reality in this insurrectionary demonstration. Neither he nor his followers will go through with the demand for the price-fixing of agricultural staples. They are conducting their fight and will continue to conduct it in Congress rather than in a presidential campaign. As a candidate, Lowden is merely the advance agent and stalking horse for Dawes. Reed, among the Democrats, disagrees sharply with almost everybody in his own and in the Republican party, but he cannot frame a political platform and create a political issue out of a personal habit of miscellaneous acerbity. They all assume that if they tell the people how they would like to govern the country, such indiscreet revelations would lose rather than win votes for them. They must, consequently, avoid contests if they can. They cannot openly appeal to the people for support without defining personal platforms, sharpening issues and declaring war on the local machines, and they are afraid that such tactics would make for them more enemies than friends. Public opinion is inert and unpredictable. Their best chance is to put themselves over. The bands must not play nor the flags fly. They are going to win, if at all, by ingenuity in maneuvering, by stratagems, and, wherever possible, by combinations with or against their opponents. It is not victory by fighting that they are striving for. It is victory by contrivance and negotiation, which will end in a peace of popular boredom and indifference.

This method of conducting a presidential campaign has both its absurd and sinister aspects. It would be fair to ridicule and to denounce it without violating the ethics of political controversy. But it is more important to understand it. Ridicule and denunciation will not in this instance get under the hides of the political strategists. In so far as they are conspiring to conceal from the public the opinions of the several candidates, or to deprive the party voters of the opportunity to be consulted about their candidates, it is a conspiracy which cannot succeed without the willing connivance of the voters. They agree with the politicians in the disposition to avoid conflict, discussion, the definition of issues and any direct communication between the candidates and themselves. They allow themselves to be diverted by sham battles between knights whose armor conceals their faces and whose shields are illuminated only by ambiguous emblems. The most interesting contest is being carried on for or against the nomination of Mr. Hoover, but so far, whenever the combatants are in danger of coming to blows, they sheer off and content themselves with scowls. The Democratic enemies of Governor Smith are not contesting his nomination; they are planning rather that his victory, if and when it comes, shall be empty and meaningless. The progressives and the socialists still occasionally intrude upon the back pages of the newspapers, but they are wholly impotent to take advantage of the popular indifference to official politics and regular candidates. Political and economic radicalism appears to have less vitality in this country now than at any time since 1896. What we are passing through is not exactly an "era of good feeling" corresponding to the political idyll of from 1818 to 1826. It is rather an era of inertia in which resentments, animosities, war-cries and the love of political and social combat are either ignored, neutralized or starved.

Obviously during the next one or two presidential elections, organized progressivism and radicalism will not offer a serious challenge or a positive alternative to the existing government of the United States. The radicals will have to save themselves from popular oblivion before they can save the country from economic decay, and they cannot

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achieve either of these results until popular opinion begins to be molded of new facts and new fancies. In the meantime, the only hope of accomplishing desirable changes in American national economy is by virtue of work on the part of its more intelligent friends from the inside. The New Republic is wholly skeptical about the sufficiency of any improvements which they can accomplish without effective outside pressure. From its point of view, American society needs for its own health and efficiency the increasing self-assertion of independently organized agrarian, wage-earning and professional classes which will demand a larger share in the initiation, adoption and the administration of public policies. It has always favored and it will continue to favor any orderly and reasonable effort to redistribute among other classes the power which is now exercised by the owners of property and their parasites. But you cannot play politics without votes or the prospect of getting them, and the several classes of hand and brain-workers will not at present listen to political agitators who urge them to insist on the demand for more power. Until they are ready to listen there will be no effective discussions, no clash of interest and conviction and very little positive popular participation in American politics. Any progressive legislation which has a chance of adoption will have to originate with the business interests themselves.

So far as the Republican party is concerned, the situation is, however, a little more encouraging than it was four years ago. With Mr. Coolidge as its head, it was committed to intellectual stagnation and moral self-satisfaction, and if in the end it should persist in renominating him, the act would be a certain indication of helpless decadence. On the other hand, Mr. Hoover's candidacy and his more aggressive method of asserting it, in spite of the candidate's own silence, does put to the voters a question which has a real meaning and may provoke a genuine discussion and a lively, if limited, conflict. The question is, at bottom, whether it is wiser for American business to use its existing power to prohibit any attempt to improve the social efficiency of capitalism, or whether it should try in the interest of its own perpetuation to mitigate by government action the weaknesses and abuses which have persisted or developed during the period of post-war prosperity.

As we have said, Mr. Hoover has not by any public statement raised this issue and, at least during the pre-convention campaign, he will not raise it. Yet it is raised by his record as Secretary of Commerce and by the attitude toward him of his opponents. Whatever else he is, Mr. Hoover is a restless and an active man, who, as President, would try to use the power of his office to accomplish something positive and socially beneficial. As Secretary of Commerce he has specialized in government aid to business efficiency. By business efficiency he has meant for the most part improvements in the technique of production, but, as he himself must know, if the government continues to encourage efficiency in production without considering how the goods can profitably and beneficially enter into consumption, it will be shirking a part of its assumed economic responsibility. There are plausible reasons for anticipating that Mr. Hoover, if elected, would, more than any other candidate, with the possible exception of Al Smith, discard the Coolidge principle that the more private business is encouraged to go its own way the more perfectly it functions. He will be pressed by his own past and an increasing economic distress to seek some improvement in the social standing of American capitalism by enlarging the ability of the American people to consume the goods which agriculture and industry are now capable of producing. His opponents within the Republican party do not explicitly object to his nomination on this ground. They base their opposition to him on his alleged arbitrariness and his dictatorial insistence upon doing things alone and in his own way, but at bottom their real grievance is that he is not safe. As President, he will act as a ferment rather than a soothing-syrup. They very much prefer a man like Dawes, who could not be suspected of opposing his own judgment upon any important question of public policy to that of Mr. Mellon and the other real people.

In spite, consequently, of the dearth of explicit issues and the stagnation of public opinion, a Republican with progressive tendencies may, if he lives in a direct-primary state, have a chance to vote for something positive; and if Mr. Hoover is nominated, he can look forward to four years of Republican government which will be animated by a better understanding of the realities of the political and economic position of the United States and a more aggressive disposition than has existed since Harding was inaugurated. Assuming that Al Smith is to be the Democratic nominee, a contest between these particular candidates might result in directing public attention to the need of some constructive economic legislation. For, curiously enough, the candidates of two extremely conservative parties in an extremely conservative country would both probably claim to be mildly and most cautiously progressive. Hoover would have little to gain by trying to get conservative votes away from Smith. Al Smith would be safe enough—safer except, perhaps, in respect to hydro-electric power, than his Republican opponent. Yet Al Smith could hardly claim that he was more conservative than his Republican opponent. Hoover would be likely to emphasize the promise that, if elected, he would have the confidence of the smaller business men of the country, and that with their help he might do something to ameliorate the existing recurrent periods of business depression. Al Smith would probably have to make as much as he could out of a similar argument. If, as is probable, the existing unemployment continues, it may dominate the campaign. But Al Smith cannot capitalize it as against Hoover unless he puts forward a sound spe-

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cific program for dealing with it and with the other associated flaws in the American economy of today. The very absence of a radical challenge to the existing system may tempt the two competing representatives of that system to bid for votes by proposing minor economic reforms rather than by following Mr. Coolidge's example and sitting pretty on top of the world of Republican prosperity.

The Reality of Unemployment

THE magical American optimism toward public questions appears nowhere more strikingly than in our treatment of unemployment. It must exist and grow for many months before it attracts any attention. No matter how much intelligent research is applied to the problem when a crisis occurs, the measures recommended, which, to be effective, must be of a permanent nature and must be built up during prosperity, are forgotten the moment the crisis is past. There is even a prevalent view that Americans do not have to provide alleviation for such ills because we are so ingenious and progressive that we are bound, almost without trying, to invent ways of preventing anything of the sort in the future. We always seem to assume, each time we have recovered from the disease, that it will never plague us again. All this is traceable to a superstition arising from fear and taboo. Unemployment is unpleasant. Its existence challenges comfortable assumptions about the unique excellence of our economy and the unequalled efficacy of our individual enterprise. We like to think that we can abolish it by forgetting it. We dislike to disturb that "confidence" which we believe is the magic of prosperity, by admitting that unemployment exists, or, if we must admit that, by admitting that it may exist again. As the chosen people of the god of material wealth, we defend our virtue by keeping the unemployed among the untouchables.

A flash of that exclusive pride has been aroused even by the repeated statement of the New Republic that the United States, alone among the important industrial nations, has no means of measuring the number out of work. It is pointed out that the unemployment figures of Great Britain are faulty in that they do not cover some occupations, that they do not include those reaching maturity who have never had a job, that they often exclude wage-earners on strike. All this may be admitted; doubtless no nation has a completely accurate measure of the unemployed. Nevertheless, Great Britain, Germany and others do have national systems of labor exchanges at which the majority of the industrially unemployed are registered. They do know important facts with regard to the greater section of the problem. They do have some assurance that many available jobs have made connection with persons who might fill them, and they do care for a large proportion of their jobless by insurance placing the burden where it belongs, on industry and the state, rather than on poor relief, private charity, and those out of work. Their approach to the problem may be incomplete, but we have not even made the approach, and we cannot excuse ourselves by calling attention to the comparatively minor deficiencies of others.

In spite of all optimism, evidence daily accumulates that this has been—and remains—a winter of extraordinary unemployment. Mr. Lawson Purdy, Director of the Charity Organization Society of New York, states that the Society is now receiving more applications than at any time in the past eleven years, and that its disbursements in December were greater than in any previous December in its history. It has been necessary for the Society to borrow many thousands of dollars to meet its obligations. Of the families which it is aiding, about 20 percent are in need because of unemployment. Two-thirds of the unemployed are between the ages of twenty-five and fifty, and nearly all are able and willing to work. Unemployed demonstrations have recently occurred in Passaic; an Ohio report speaks of the out-of-work crisis in that state; New England is suffering; and, of course, we have constant reports of misery from the coal regions.

How many are actually out of work? The only attempt at detailed estimate which we have seen comes from the Labor Bureau, Inc., of New York, which guesses, on the basis of the admittedly insufficient evidence, that there are about 4,000,000, or nearly one-tenth of the total gainfully occupied in the nation. This guess, when examined, does not appear unreasonable. By applying the index of employment in manufacturing industries to the basic census figures, it estimates the decrease in the number of these workers between 1923 and 1927. It uses the Interstate Commerce Commission figures of railway employees for a similar estimate in that occupation. By applying production indices to the probable totals of coal miners and building employees in 1923, and allowing for no change which may have occurred in these industries due to increased productivity, it arrives at the estimated change in their employment figures during the past five years. And it uses Professor Slichter's estimate, in last week's New Republic, of the number of farm workers who have moved to town seeking jobs. The table follows:

ESTIMATED DECREASE IN EMPLOYMENT
1923-1927

	Number Employed (Est.)		*Approximate*
	1923	*1927*	*Change*
Mfg. Industries	8,778,156	7,768,668	—1,000,000
Railways (Class I)	1,880,000	1,774,000	—100,000
Coal Mines	862,536	787,150	—100,000
Farm Workers Moved to Town			—1,000,000
Building Workers	1,415,975	1,701,248	+300,000
Total	13,936,667	12,031,066	—1,900,000

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It is noted that while the number of employed building workers has probably increased since 1923, it is now less than in the past two years. Thus far, about one-third of the gainfully occupied population are accounted for, and the decrease indicated is about 13 percent. Since the population has grown about 5 percent in the period, we must further account for an addition of about 3,000,000 to those of employable age. And since there is always a minimum reserve of unemployed, even in the most prosperous years, there is added the conservative estimate of 1,000,000 out of work at the base period —1923. All this adds up to the formidable total of 5,900,000. The chief question is, How many of these may have found jobs in the occupations which the figures so far do not cover? Here is where the widest disagreement is possible. The Labor Bureau places the figure of increase in these occupations at the conservatively large sum of 1,850,000, by assigning a growth of 200,000 to the professions, 100,000 to amusement trades, 200,000 to public utilities, 750,000 to automobile sales and service, 500,000 to other distributive trades, and 100,000 to miscellaneous occupations. The net total of unemployed thus becomes about 4,000,000.

Divide this in half, if you like, and it still remains a huge army, dependent for what sustenance it has upon the charity of others, and, for the greater part, upon contributions from the scanty pay envelopes of relatives, friends and fellow workers who can ill afford the burden. Remove this burden, find wages for the jobless—and imagine the stimulus to markets and to the national income! If by act of Congress 4,000,000, or 3,000,000, or 2,000,000 men and women were removed from productive work for no good purpose, business would allow nothing else to be considered until the act were rescinded. Will it refuse to give consideration to a similar situation, just because it has crept upon us unwilled?

Already, it may be said, conditions have improved, and unemployment may have shrunk to the "normal" level before we can get around to doing anything about it. Even if this were so, we ought to prepare for the next onslaught. But it is not likely to be so. Improvement has been visible recently in automobile manufacturing and steel. The motor manufacturers have been preparing in advance for the spring trade; it remains to be seen whether they can sell many more cars than in 1927, over a series of months. Steel has benefited, not only by increased demand from the automobile industry, but from large railroad orders, partly carried over from last year. But the expectation is that not much more will be spent by the railroads for plant and equipment in 1928 as a whole than in 1927. Large contracts for public works have been awarded: whether these and new capital expenditures for industry will serve to make up the recent deficiencies in production remains at the least an open question. No recovery is in sight for textiles or coal, which contribute large divisions of the unemployed army. There is no sure sign on the horizon that business will continue to be much better this year than last.

Even if a moderate revival is sustained, moreover, we have to reckon with the fact, pointed out by Professor Slichter, that a large part of the present unemployment has crept upon us gradually as a result of more efficient processes, rather than as a result of a temporary industrial slump. When factory output went up 27 percent after July, 1924, factory employment grew only 6.2 percent. The utmost conceivable recovery of production would not take care of any such numbers of unemployed as are now indicated. The present problem is likely to be a continuing one, as unemployment has not been, with us, since the seventies and eighties of the last century.

In spite of all these considerations, we expect that responsible quarters will either ignore the present unemployment, or will deny that it exists, or will say that it is a minor difficulty, sure to correct itself in time if the customary encouragement is given to business interests. If all these evasions are not sufficient to obscure the facts, we expect the unemployment to be attributed to the investigation of the electric-power industry, or to a fear that the Democrats will win the election, or to any prominent manifestation of opinion regarding the industrial scene which those in power do not happen to like—even to an increasing discussion of unemployment itself. But the fact will remain that an administration whose only important claim to public favor is a special oversight over prosperity will be seeking vindication in a year when employment—surely one of the most fundamental indices of prosperity—has been at a low ebb. This certainly offers an exceptional opportunity to question whether that administration knows what prosperity is, or is capable of giving it substance. If somehow the taboo on unemployment can be broken, and its reality recognized, America may begin to substitute medicine for magic in its treatment of economic ills.

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Reconstructing the Sex Ethic

I

THOUGH it is recorded of the human, as of other forms of animate earth, that "male and female created He them," the extension of that principle to the talking animal was apparently a quite special dispensation, prompted by the initial appearance of ennui in the cosmos. And, exhilarating as our common progenitor must have found his first experience of that fatal dichotomy, his second thoughts may possibly have raised a doubt. One pictures him, in the leisure moments of a career that had somehow regrettably miscarried, observing the fissiparous technique of less complicated creatures with a ruminative eye, and wondering whether, unexciting as that seemed by contrast, it might not have its advantages. Undoubtedly, he might reflect, these incidental aspects of human polarity add as much to the interest of life as does their common origin to its mere quantity; but does not that interest amount, at times, almost to too much of a good thing? And following upon that first misgiving, his infinite posterity now finds a certain difficulty in admitting the natural relations of man and woman to the category of good things. There has been a constant tradition to the effect that they are, on the whole, a bad thing, or, at best, a thing needing apology to oneself or whatever powers one desires to propitiate.

One does not need to go back to the third chapter of Genesis, or the astringent apostle Paul with his "better to marry than burn," for evidence of this. Most of us need go no farther back than our own childhood. Aside from the innumerable cases in which children—especially girls—were told that any approach to complete intimacy was "bad" or "wicked" or "horrid," and redeemable only by a ceremony called marriage (of which the relevance to this aspect of it was by no means self-evident), it is to be remarked that an atmosphere of clandestinity or secrecy, deliberately maintained about a practice known to be persistent, invariably arouses, in the minds of the non-initiate, the idea of "sin." And what that idea can do, in the way of subsequent mental and moral damage, psychology is just beginning to discover.

Of course, the process was and is natural enough. Here is a force of universal appeal, potent either to disrupt or to conserve organized society, and needing, therefore, extremely circumspect and precautionary handling. The simplest—indeed, the only—thing to do, for people who had no really adequate means of control, was to surround it with the most elaborate of authoritative taboos: much as contraceptive information is surrounded today. *Faute de mieux,* that served—as long as the taboos held. But the first thing to recognize about our present situation is that the taboos have lost their compulsion. They have lost it in the same process of social evolution that has undermined the authoritarian principle in religion, politics and law. And, however much one may regret the dominance of purely negative forces, there is no putting the clock back—there is no returning to the rule of extrinsic sanction backed by coercion. Society has no choice but to accept the fact of its own evolution, and build as wisely as it can on the altered premises.

II

Outstanding among these negative forces is the backwash of the War: the temper of cynical realism engendered by the War itself in many still youthful survivors, and by its sequel of folly and chaos in many still younger observers. It is of no use for erstwhile war enthusiasts to turn, now it is over, and prate about the importance of individual life and conduct to God, or society, or any other abstraction. What there is in life, says youth today, is there for me, or not at all; to be sampled and valued at first hand, not any more vicariously. Some of it, we older ones know, may leave a bitter taste in years to come, and we would fain warn these loved adventurers. But we are not in the strongest of positions to do so. Compare the state of the western world at Edward the Seventh's coronation with what it is today, and consider the effect on the vantage ground of the older generation!

Second, there is the natural reaction of youth to the degradation of the authoritarian principle. Your true conservative needs a wiser brain and a wider culture than any radical; but contemporary aspirants to that role are seldom so equipped. Instead, we have the disgusting spectacle of rank selfishness, downright fear of clean, hard thinking, passionate stupidity, barricading themselves behind age-worn dogmas that do not, on examination, support the constructions put upon them, and retreating in disorder from positions that are not sound enough even to earn respect. Infinite harm has been wrought to Christianity, in these latter days, by the attempt of interested persons to wrest from its precious heritage dogmatic, *a priori,* answers to problems of ethics and economics that its founder clearly excluded, as being capable of solution by honest human brains using their own resources. Fundamentalism and its kindred creeds appear to young minds that fear not effort and experiment, nor even suffering, so like subterfuge that the difference is hardly worth examining. A live and arduous authoritarianism, like Lenin's or Mussolini's, can still evoke the enthusiasm of youth; but a dead one smells to heaven.

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Another and less reassuring influence working in the negative sense arises from the popularization of what is (incorrectly) called the new psychology. Great as is the contribution of the analytic schools to the data upon which we reason, their work has had some curious and not altogether fortunate by-products. One of them is the disparagement of the will (or, if you prefer, of the integrating power of active as opposed to passive conative attitudes). The semi-educated have fastened avidly upon the idea of repression as the source of mental malady, and proceeded to infer that all will be set right by simply lifting the lid off one's particular private hades.

And following with graver effect upon this comes a charge more germane to the science itself. Looseness of terminology is, I suppose, an unavoidable abomination in the humane sciences; but the use of the word "sex" and its associates by the analysts has involved more than merely academic misunderstanding. For it is generally taken—not merely by the layman—in the customary specialized connotation of common experience; and even the word "libido," in the absence of any meaning that even experts can define, popularly receives the same interpretation. What they are really on the trail of is something so much vaster and more elemental than what the average person understands by "sex" that even the word "life" would be, for him, less misleading. And one of the consequences of this misunderstanding is a popular fixation upon certain recognizable impulses, that positively adds to the difficulty of controlling or educating them. Add to this fact the decay of restrictive taboos already noted, and the natural result is a situation to which even the cheapest journalism and the most popular movies bear witness.

III

Now, in view of this rather formidable array of negative forces, and of the improbability of any reconstruction of sex ethics succeeding along authoritarian lines, what positive elements does the situation offer?

It offers, at the outset, one undeniable criterion as the aim and test of the whole business: namely, the child. That criterion is being very strongly upheld by the post-war generation and its advocates; more strongly, and more iconoclastically, than at any other time. Amid the welter of uncertainties in both theory and experience, youth will not tolerate the sacrifice of this one certain thing to any code or dogma. And youth is right. In a not very distant future, the claim of society to intervene, by law or contract or in any other way, in the personal relations of two adults must be explicitly—perhaps exclusively—grounded on their one really social aspect: parenthood. The social determination of that responsibility is legitimate and primary; all the rest is secondary and by comparison unimportant. For it is parenthood, and not the marriage law, that forms the binding cement of the home; and the more it is conceived as a privilege balanced by responsibility, the safer the home will be. Law can avail nothing in the absence of that conception; and the importance of birth control lies chiefly in its power to enhance the dignity and the quality of parenthood by making it deliberate and voluntary.

There need be no fear that the function will die of inanition. Maternity and child-raising are yearly being rendered less harassing and more attractive than ever before; and there are probably no more young people today than there ever were who desire marriage without children. The difficulty is much more likely to arise from insistence on the privilege of parenthood even where the conventional adult relations fail of establishment or maintenance. But that difficulty need alarm no one. It can never result in more than the small proportion of exceptional cases that any human system must sustain. For all the weight of evidence goes to confirm the desirability of the home as the normal environment of both parents and children; and educated young people are as well aware of that as they are of other things. One is tempted to say, take care of the child and the rest will take care of itself. The continued willingness of society, in some quarters, to sacrifice certain less fortunate children on the altar of a pet taboo, in the face of the explicit instructions of Jesus to the contrary, is one of the many paradoxes of what now passes for Christianity.

A secondary implication of modern knowledge, however, raises an issue which the majority of non-Catholic Churches, and all the reactionary groups, have deliberately side-stepped. Both science and psychology seem to suggest that complete intimacy legitimately may—in some cases, should—subsist in cases where parenthood is either not possible, not desired, or not desirable. Do we, or do we not, believe this? And if we do, must we still go on insisting that all such cases be brought under the category of formal marriage? This, as everybody knows, is a theoretical rather than a practical question: so much so, in fact, that our social situation would be healthier if the theoretical position were cleared up. It is not sanitary to have too many decrepit theories lying around.

Here, also, enlightened conservatism might have much to contribute; while unenlightened conservatism can do nothing but degrade what it touches. As a sample of what it can do along this line, I quote the following contemporary utterance of a well known clergyman in a very popular magazine:

> Marriage is, after a fashion, a trades-union of women for their own protection. The prostitute and the vamp are the scabs who underbid the union wage. When men begin to believe, with Samuel Butler, that it is cheaper to buy milk than to keep a cow, their discovery is a sad one for those among the dairy-maids who have lost their rosy cheeks and have begun to discover now and then a gray hair in the comb. . . .

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> Married women will do well to reserve their union cards, and keep their dues well paid, and also keep up the high quality of their goods. They have competition.

What is going to be the effect, on an intelligent and high-spirited girl, of that clergyman's vindication of marriage? Talk about Bolshevism!!

By the Book of Common Prayer, marriage has three objects: the procreation and upbringing of children; the avoidance of sin; and "the mutual society, help, and comfort, that the one ought to have of the other, both in prosperity and adversity." Further, it is conceived throughout as of a permanent character. Now it is surely clear that this enduring nexus of human solidarity (for it will endure) is best maintained by insisting on its traditional characteristics, and is injured by forcing it to cover relations inconsistent with these essentials. May these other relations, however, subsist at all, or must they altogether be condemned as "sin"? The answer is, in fact, that they do exist, and are in many cases undoubtedly exempt from the contemporary, or the strictly Christian definition of sin. For the clear tradition on this point is the identification of "sin" with "lust"—purely physical desire; and few would argue, even today, against the condemnation of that basis as such. Relations that are worthy of establishment at all—let alone, of avowal—must needs have some better foundation. It is, none the less, an unfortunate fact that large numbers of post-war marriages, as well as the perennial crop of other types of union, have had little more to build on. And the essential difficulty is to admit the possibility of relations that do not look toward home and parenthood—the aims of the true marriage—without opening the door to an increase in the quantity of purely physical unions.

Now this is a difficulty with which law cannot deal. The old puritan attempt to translate an ethical code into terms of positive law (about as effective a way of divorcing ethics from morality as could possibly be devised) is now a patent failure, save as a pretext for blackmail. The problem is educational: instead of inculcating, by precept and coercion, rules of "morality," we find ourselves forced to rely on the development of a sense of values in the individual. That is, at any rate, a less hopeless alternative; it is, in fact, more hopeful than it sounds. For youth, as youth, wants naturally the fine, grand thing—the best that life can rise to; and the fine thing, in love, is, in the vast majority of cases, naturally associated with the ideas of permanence, and of children. Marriage is still its natural consummation. The danger (it is not really a new danger) emphasized by modern liberty and modern science lies in the temptation to accept, from impatience, curiosity, or passion, something less than the fine thing; to swindle soul and body with the second-rate.

This temptation is strengthened by the calculated exploitation on the part of *entrepreneurs* in the various branches of commercialized amusement, of the present liberty of attitude toward sex; and thoughtful and tolerant people are frequently led to condone their wretched output by a false interpretation of another psychoanalytic term: sublimation. Genuine sublimation, leaving no hang-over of unsatisfied craving, is a rare thing that seldom comes by accident. It postulates mental experience of an intensely active character, with activity as its end and continuing result. Some minds find it in religion—but not in the sort of religion that consists in a dish of stale ethics served in a lukewarm mess of emotion. Some find it in the arts; some in other forms of genuine mental activity. But for few, indeed, is it an easy or a spontaneous thing. And to foist upon the half-educated, as avenues of sublimation, what is, in fact, virulent stimulation, is to make the inescapable task of self-control gratuitously harder.

An element that may, I think, be fairly invoked in the reconstruction of a sex ethic relates especially to the young women; for it is they who have led the demand for the abolition of the (supposed) dual standard. Christian teaching—or rather, Christ's teaching—while rejecting the dual standard in ideal, tempered that rejection with a human tolerance of both male and female aberrations in practice. In the true marriage, mutual fidelity is not too much to expect; but in the counterfeit that goes under the same name, infidelity may be the least of a lot of possible evils. Let us, however, accept, by all means, the single standard if it is really demanded: hold men to the same standard as women, or (what is usually meant by the demand) assent to women using the same (supposed) license as men—provided they accept an entirely personal responsibility. Indeed, the best service one can render to the young woman who, under pretense of abolishing the dual standard, claims the enlargement of her liberties to what she fondly supposes are the dimensions of the male, is to remind her that she thereby forfeits any right to special consideration as woman, should the bestowal of her heart and person prove ill-advised. It is not fair play, if or when the situation gets out of hand, for her to creep for status and protection back to the skirts of Mother Grundy, dragging, as like as not, some miserable male with her. *Faites vos jeux,* ladies!—the bank is certainly open. And the men have already a little score to settle with you.

Society, too, has perhaps a little score to settle. For the organs upon which it must always rely to establish its standards, its values, to discriminate between things more and less worth while, are the women; and to judge by present standards, present values, they are doing the job none too well. This organized male world will go on producing things good and bad, helter-skelter, in unmitigated profusion; if the sense of discrimination between the various satisfactions it offers is lacking in the women—well, Spengler will be right: it will be merely

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another civilization that failed. That is why the education of women must always be a special and a crucial function: education conceived as the initiation of the mind to ever new and finer types of experience.

For the nemesis that waits upon a careless use of liberty is none other than the impoverishment of life it entails. To all sincere and tempered living, some humble partnership with the greatest of mankind lies open. But from the mind and body debauched by cheap emotion, the enduring values of life are withdrawn, perhaps forever; and the punishment is visited upon the children. Life is like art in this, that the secret of achievement lies in economy. It may be that "those who husbanded the golden grain, And those who flung it to the winds like rain, Alike to no such aureate earth are turned——" but if that golden grain be the body and soul of youth, the interest thereon will fail to fill the glass even before time turns it down.

True liberty, said Merejkowski, depends upon the strength of the retaining walls; and it is from those retaining walls, built in bitter travail of human will and wisdom, that the pinnacles of experience arise. Without them, there is no climbing the summits of great art or great living. The dull level below them knows no finger of the undying fire laid upon the frail beauty of mortal flesh, no saving glimpse of

l'amor che muove il sole e l'altre stelle.

And if some bastard psychologist informs me that that of Dante is nowadays a very explicable form of illusion, my answer may consist in the simple statement that, even so, I still prefer it. Or, if I am generous, it may follow somewhat the lines of Bishop Blougram's advice to Mr. Gigadibs. Or, more briefly, it may involve a sash-weight.

WILLIAM ORTON.

Unspoken Words from Havana

GLITTERING across the ball-room a diamond is a very spear-head of light; but under the microscope, it shows as many planes and facets as a cubist's portrait of a world. Viewed from New York or Washington, "the attitude of Latin America toward the United States" looks all solid and smooth, but in the white glare of Havana sunshine, at the Sixth Pan-American Conference, it reveals itself so variegated and confused that one comes to feel it has no existence at all. There is no one attitude shared by all countries; nor, needless to say, by all political parties within a country. Intransigent opponents have been kept at home, even, as in Haiti, by main force. Not all the members of any one delegation think alike, a statement which is markedly true of the American group itself. Probably some individuals shift their attitude, if not from day to day, at least from year to year. One would need the qualities of Marcel Proust, the quantities of the Encyclopedia Britannica, to give an adequate idea of this kaleidoscope.

We may, however, as the Conference drags through its uneventful third week, pause to glance at some of the chief attitudes which are on exhibition. Mexico, for instance, is chiefly concerned, first, to get out of her immediate and extremely serious financial difficulty by negotiating a new loan in New York, and second, to avoid yielding so much to the United States in the process that she is again in danger of having foreign capital take the place of national government—a danger which was acute when the 1917 Constitution was written. She is under the necessity of being conciliatory—yet this necessity did not prevent her trying, and trying hard, last week, to wrest the Pan-American Union out of Uncle Sam's tight paw.

Argentina, which gets most of her foreign capital at present from Great Britain, does not yet feel the pressure of our money upon her institutions. She has two main preoccupations: she would like to see a reduction of the United States' present tariff barriers against her beef, and she wishes an extension, in Pan-American relations, of the principle of arbitration which has always been a corner-stone of her foreign policy.

Chile has come to the Conference with a phobia regarding Tacna-Arica, prepared to resist to the death any proposal which means more arbitration, or any other international meddling, in that question.

Brazil is, as usual, the professional friend of the United States—an attitude which she has made almost into a career. She sells us her coffee on satisfactory terms, has no serious economic grievance, and is at present even better disposed than usual because she is at odds with the League of Nations.

Colombia and Venezuela are the next two Mexicos which must solve the problem of American economic penetration or see their sovereignty whittled down to nothing. They are sitting on the sidelines and saying little. Bolivia is ready to trade almost anything for an outlet to the sea, and thinks America is her most useful ally in furthering this cause. Peru is in a similar state of mind, about Tacna and Arica.

Cuba, broadly speaking, has no attitude in the Conference. The Platt Amendment binds her to the United States. So does the fact that two-thirds

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of her industry is owned in and adjacent to Wall Street. So does the semi-dictatorship of her rough-shod President Machado, who is a complaisant chief figure in a Laocoön group, with Cuban industry and politics as the children and American capital as the serpent.

Central America is the grain beneath the hoof of the ox, and knows it. Most of her delegates (and this is also true of Haiti's) were selected because they would stand without hitching, under America's shed. Panama has a specific grievance against us, because our government stores (commissaries) which pay no duty on their imported supplies, sell at cut prices in the Canal Zone, and take trade away from the Panamanian merchants. This, and not the technical question of sovereignty in the zone, or the clause binding Panama to go to war when we do, is the chief reason why the treaty of 1926 has never been ratified by the Panamanian National Assembly. This is a matter, however, with which the Pan-American Conference can hardly be expected to deal. In so far as there are discordant voices heard in any of the other delegations, they are those of courageous individuals, and not of the governments which they represent.

Many observers at Havana have noted the more conciliatory attitude of most countries since the fifth conference at Santiago, Chile, in 1923, and have sought the reason for it. On the part of the United States there is an increasing concern lest political hostility toward us should interfere with the growth of our trade. Europe is recovering, industrially, and is pushing us harder for Latin-American business than at any time since the War began. Despite the increase in our commerce, of which our business men are so proud, we still do only a twelfth of the foreign business of Paraguay, a sixth of Argentina's and Bolivia's, a fifth of Uruguay's, about a third of Brazil's, Chile's, Peru's, Salvador's, Venezuela's, less than half of Costa Rica's, Santo Domingo's, Ecuador's, Haiti's. Much greater expansion is possible. Our investments are large, more than five billions, but for every American dollar of investment Europeans still have $1.40.

Latin America has its own reason for an increased friendliness toward us. The majority of the countries below the Rio Grande are now in the condition which characterized the United States during the nineteenth century. They are in process of development, and for this they need outside capital. Just at present our country is the world's greatest storehouse of money. The question becomes, On what terms is this capital to be lent? The borrowing countries would like to get it as cheaply as possible, limiting profits by heavy taxation, and limiting political consequences by invoking the principle of domicile, under which foreign investors are compelled to accept all the restrictions inflicted upon natives. The Americans, being human, want the highest rate of return they can get, and no restrictions which they can avoid.

In this second desire they have had, to an astonishing degree, the aid of President Coolidge and his administration. Pushed on by native impulse, lifelong training, and the hearty plaudits of the capitalists, he has created a Coolidge doctrine that somehow or other the protection of property which has been built up by our courts out of a phrase in our Constitution is also to be found in "international law," though neither he nor anyone else is able to say where.

A contest between the United States and Latin America on this basis alone would probably result in a victory for the former, since its citizens outnumber all the Latin populations combined, in a proportion of more than twelve to ten, and the difference as to wealth and power is vastly greater still. But another factor enters, which greatly aids the Latin cause: public opinion, in the United States and Europe. Discount the latter, if you please, as being selfishly motivated: there remain many thousands of American citizens who have protested against unjust actions in Mexico, in Central America, in the Caribbean, on the sole ground that they were unjust. That protest was a powerful factor in the change of attitude toward Mexico, signalized by the recall of Sheffield and substitution of Morrow; and it had much to do with the sending of such men as Hughes, Morrow and Ray Lyman Wilbur to Havana, and with the amiabilities they have been practising there.

These amiabilities, it should be repeated, are, of course, mostly on the surface. Not many real concessions of importance have been made. In 1923 the United States agreed that governments not recognized by our State Department might be members of the Pan-American Union. We have now agreed that any country which wishes to do so may be represented on the Governing Board by someone other than its ambassador or minister at Washington. In the effort to promote commercial aviation without endangering the Panama Canal, we have compromised on various fairly unimportant points. The list includes an agreement that Canada may be invited to sign the convention, though in general the United States is opposed to letting Canada have anything to do with the P. A. U. Mr. Hughes has apologized for the presence of Dr. Leo S. Rowe, Director of the Union, in the American delegation (which offended some Latins) by saying it was the only way to bring Dr. Rowe along, and has introduced a resolution that in the future the Director shall take a free ride to all conferences at the Union's expense. He has also, as I mentioned last week, uttered a fine-sounding general defense of America's policy in the Caribbean and Central America, which told how happily we would get out of these countries, without ever mentioning (except in the case of one intervention in Nicaragua, the present) how we ever happened to get in.

But on serious matters the United States stands firm, and a safe majority of the Latin republics

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stand with her. The Mexican proposal for rotating the chief posts in the P. A. U. among the twenty-one republics did not receive a single favorable vote except her own. Substantially the same fate may be expected for every other proposal which runs sharply counter to the United States' policy. Latin America is girding her loins to challenge our overlordship, but the sharpest phase of the struggle is still years in the future, and much of it will take place in a sphere with which the successive Pan-American Conferences have little or no concern. If we care to, it is probable that we can, by the exercise of intelligent statesmanship, avoid most of the conflict. Latin America wants our money. Only one South American country is a competitor of ours in world trade, and that in a field—the export of foodstuffs—which we shall soon have abandoned. If our capitalists were willing to accept reasonable restrictions, instead of seeking all the profits that can be gouged out, and demanding control of government as an incidental; if our statesmanship could really be operated on a basis of Mr. Hughes' fair words rather than Mr. Kellogg's deeds, we could for decades to come manage to collect the ha'pence and dodge the kicks. But perhaps this represents an impossible height of statesmanship. Looking back over the record of Messrs. Coolidge and Kellogg, it would seem so.

BRUCE BLIVEN.

Havana.

The Re-Discovery of America

VI: *The Grave of Europe*

The foregoing articles have been a series of progressive approaches to America. Mr. Frank set forth that America was the issue of what was one great Western Culture. The sources of that Culture were the Mediterranean shores—Judea, Greece, Alexandria, Rome; its height as an organic Whole was the medieval Christian Synthesis of Europe; its dissolution is the modern epoch. The Mediterranean was its symbol; the Atlantic is the symbol of its break; and beyond the Atlantic lies America. The dissolution was expressed by action; action became the modern value. Discovery, invention, science, and such new ideals as nationalism, secular internationalism, protestantism, were examples of the conceptual deliquescence of the Body of Europe. The voyage of Columbus symbolizes it; the emphasis on personal will energizes it; the machine embodies this deliquescence. Again and again, this "action" which is the break-up of Europe leads to America. But action also may lead to a new kind of knowledge. Knowledge in old Europe was static and dogmatic. Modern science and life has destroyed this kind of knowledge, and provides a new means to knowledge in the new attitude toward action. . . . In "The Sense of the Whole" Mr. Frank established that the creating of wholes is the basic human need: science, art, religion express it in an ascending series. The ultimate Whole —religion—cannot survive without sound substructures: the wholes of science and art. This explains the death of cultural Europe, the preparatory role of modern science, and the American problem.—THE EDITORS.

AMERICA, the New World, was a world born old. It was harmonious that the Spaniards, when they came, should have found Indian cultures past their prime, for they and their followers brought with them fragments and embers of a dying Europe. America, the land of resurrection, was first of all the grave of Europe.

The exact motives of the pioneer cannot be isolated. Socially, spiritually, psychologically, he no longer fitted in the ancient Body. With equal justice, the Body may be said to have broken out in forces dissonant with its wholeness, forces of ill-health, forces embodied by the pioneer. He was a discharge from Europe. His contingency on the old world that could no longer hold him is clear in the little breathless Europes which he set up on the American shore.

Here, long after their decay at home, survived traits of the old world. The Puritan village of New England[1] retained from the crumbled synthesis of Rome the plan of a theocracy. In Massachusetts, man lived by the Law of the Lord: his conduct and his business were theoretically ruled by the interpreting Spirit. Pope Gregory VII, who projected the earth as the Body of Christ, could not have asked a more literal government by the Holy Ghost, although the astringent effects on mind and sense in holy America might have disgusted him. The main difference was that the New England village stood alone; it had a monopoly of righteousness; in its sole hand the Lord was brandished; its neighbor down the turnpike was almost certain to be damned. In the South, relics of feudalism were revived with a precision long lost to Europe. From plantation to county to commonwealth, the hierarchy rose on steps of loyalty and personal service. At the bottom was land and the serf. Spanish America carried on the manorial paternalism of old Spain. Even the evangelical youth of

[1] See, in this regard, the instructive pages of "Sticks and Stones," by Lewis Mumford.

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Christendom—the day of the apostle sowing among the Gentiles—had its brief recapture when the Jesuits voyaged and builded from Uruguay to Quebec. America, once colonized, was at once archaic. Social, political, and religious customs escaped from the too organic change of Europe, found with us a final resting place where they might flare in lingering afterglow, before they flickered out forever. Even our languages remained archaic. The locutions and songs of the era of Queen Anne were mummified in the Kentucky mountains; the Castilian of Felipe II merged with the Andalusian of the *conquistadores* to make an American Spanish that today is older than the present tongue of Spain.

A religion sick to death may strive to offset the dimming of its heart by peripheral action. It will turn proselytizer.[1] Thus decadent Judaism at Alexandria, converting the Gentile until with Paul the will to spread lopped the new branch from the bole. Thus, now, Catholicism, flaming across the Sea while its altars in Spain and France and Germany died down. The American works of Jesuits, of English Catholics and of their Protestant foes were really one: were actions of the decay of Christian Europe. And here again, the afterglow for a while outshone the mother fires. Sectarianism flourished in our land. Each particle of religion arrogated to itself the mission of the Whole. Atoms of dogma, each propelled by the whole weight of a tradition vast enough to sustain all Europe, went wild: went bounding and bursting over the wide land. Scripture was unearthed in Missouri; millennia were realized in farm communities of Ohio and New York. The Inquisition rose in South America with a compassionate ferocity that it had lost in Spain.

These transplanted forces lived their American hour with the hurry of age about to die; above all, with the fever of dissociation. The religious impulse in America was manic; which means that it was a normal impulse made abnormal by being freed from the balancing restraint of a part within a whole. In hearty Europe, revelation, dogma and salvation had been held to a body that was social as well as spiritual. Now, each trait of the Synthesis burst forth alone, became a pseudo-whole: like any insane impulse, became a law unto itself. This explains the intensity in American life of Christian forms which were already past their prime when they leaked out from Europe. There was superstition in Europe; freed of social context in Salem, it burned witches. There was Calvinism in Europe; solitary in its corners of America, it could starken into Jonathan Edwards. Europe had mystical paranoia; in our land it was sufficiently unimpeded by social forces, sufficiently attuned to the rhythm of little disembodied social wills, to produce Joseph Smith and the Mormons.

[1] Of course, a young religion may proselytize as well.

Europe had been builded on a synthesis of faith in revelation, faith in reason to interpret it; and in the dual mold of an equalitarianism of the spirit guarded and guided by a social order whose authority was not of wealth but of Value. As the Value in Europe's leaders dimmed, their body of visible substance became stressed. The king and prelate who had ruled because ideally they were keepers of God's truth, were forced at last to rule because they had the *force* of rulers. There arose a class, known as the bourgeoisie, which dispensed with an inane authority of Spirit, setting its rights squarely on the property which it possessed. The divine right of kings and churchmen shifted to their real power, wealth; and the middle class, which had the substance of gold without the shadow of spirit, moved to unseat them.

The brightest theater of this Tournament became our land; its first great Joust was the American Revolution. Everywhere in Europe, Property, uncrowned, battled with Privilege, whose crown grew with the years more flimsy. Everywhere Property won. In America alone, its victory was so great that it stole not alone the power of Privilege but its crown and trappings, also. America, first of all, took the fragmented authority of medieval Europe and set it squarely on the brow of Possession.[1] Once again, an idea sprung from Europe grew maniacal in America because it was alone.

The ideologies of our classic age came to consist of parts of the organic Theory of Europe. There, mystic faith, reason, equalitarianism of the soul, authority and liberty of Value, had grown together in a cultural Form whose imperfections should not blind us to its grandiose purpose and to its lovely works. In the modern dissolution, the principles of faith, of reason, of equality, of liberty and value were rent asunder: asunder they boarded our Colonies: asunder worked their fragmentary message in the colonial mind.

America became a land of men possessed of little remnants of an ideal Whole: men who had faith in revelation and no reason: men who had faith in reason and no reasonable faith: men who made social democracy the whole of religion: men who worshiped Property alone as value. Each of these fragments, assuming the entire energy of Truth, grew domineering. The individualism and *laissez-faire* of England became the atomism of America. The equalitarianism of France (knitted intact there within a surviving social order) became the herd chaos of Jeffersonian and Jacksonian democracy. The sects of the dissolving European Church became the ambulant mad-houses that dotted the farmland from Oneida to Salt Lake. The rationalism of European science, whose founders had openly de-

[1] Even in such a Republic as that of the French, the trappings remain with the legally defunct nobility and with the intellectual heirs of the medieval clerks. America made the first thoroughgoing aristocracy of unlanded money: i. e., of fluid power.

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clared allegiance to some mystic faith, shrank with us into an atheistical religion that stuck the universe within the pigeon-hole of its own logic. Finally, the bourgeois movements of industrialized Europe became the frantic property-ism of the American towns.

Each part believed itself whole. Kindred or adjacent parts joined loosely to create a Section. And now, America was a crazy-quilt of sections. There was the section of Puritan New England, the section of more conservative New York and New Jersey, the feudal section of the South, the dissident section of the southern mountains, the section of the Jacksonian Mississippi. Each section created a sectionalism of its very own: a rabid rationalization of its specific interests; and the idea of each was a sprawling makeshift pieced from splintered Europe. Within the section, there was no harmony. The religious and rationalist fanatics of Boston dwelt askance together. Farmers and town mechanics in New York spoke no concordant words. There was only a minimum of accommodation; only the fulsome rhetoric of the politician to make them at least drunk together. Between the great sectionalisms—the North, the South, the Wests——there was the hostility that turned to bloodshed.

The Civil War marks the death of these abscissive parts of Europe, in a final deliquescence. The afterglow of each in our land had had a certain splendor. Feudalism in the South won a crepuscular day; the relics of architecture and of manners still extant attest it. In New England, the Puritans—an amalgam of the dissidence from the Catholic Whole of Germany, Britain, France—produced a twilight fever. There was Thoreau, whose withdrawal to Walden corresponds to Ossian and Rousseau. There was the community life (Brook Farm, for instance) to answer Fourier and Saint-Simon. Above all, there was Emerson, whose molecular, opalescent style was the symbol of the gathering of dusk. At dusk, favorite hour of the romantic painters, the lights of day prismatically break; so in Emerson, as in a mirror, there was caught a kaleidoscope of visions from Plato to Fichte.

The Western Section had achieved an epic perhaps more real, since it was less contingent on old Europe, more in touch with aboriginal America. Its ideology—Jackson's equalitarianism—came into contact with the reserve of the Red Men, delved into the febrile dark of the American forest from which the Indian had builded his restraint. Such proto-mystic types as Daniel Boone became a seed in the American soil; a world really new moved blindly in them. Ere it dissolved, this Section created a beginning of our own, in the semi-conscious, aspirational Lincoln. In Lincoln, the acknowledged motives were of the old Americas which bred him; he tried to speak like his fathers. But these ideal elements implanted by the patrists of the Constitution became in him a deed as different from them as is the oak from the acorn. He was the incarnate prophecy of our transfiguration. And that he rose, while the "Union" of decayed Americas which he ostensibly battled to preserve boiled to its death, should be a mystic symbol and a proof of our national destiny of resurrection.

The most eloquent of America's sectionalisms were those of political theory.[1] Hamilton, Washington, Jefferson, Madison, Marshall, were men so brilliant and so well attuned to the colonial status, that they produced a political ideology of our own. They, too, were derivative of Europe. And the America they expressed was in itself a Section—a part of the American Grave of the old world. But their energy survived them. Their political fragment of a Whole (in which statecraft had been inspirited by fusion with philosophy and religion) became, with their successors, manic—like the religious fragments. Politics, since religion was in a corner by itself, took the place of religion. The mechanics of American social action arrogated to itself the work of ethics and of Scripture. With energy dislocated from the Whole that no longer survived, it assumed the work of creating the American man. It became an absolute. And as the world in which it tried to function slipped more and more from being the world which had called it forth, the gestures of our politics grew more violent, its pretensions still more manic. Politics and government at last were windy and noisome bodies without mind: they bespoke a world which was gone, they strove to act in a world not yet created.

It is an error to believe that in the Civil War the South lost and the North won. That Struggle was the death-spasm of all the Sections, of all our pasts. America emerged from it without sectionalisms, without organic past at all. It was swept to a flat atomic formlessness. Individuals survived, of course, who carried within them the old Americas. But the idea and the impulse which had begotten Hamilton, Jefferson, Emerson, was now gone. America spread like an unbounded water into an age without leaders and idea-less. Natural forces went on working: capitalist slavery, the momentum of industrial and territorial expansion. But they worked uncontrolled, they had no rationale. A Calhoun did not rise to make an ideal of the Machine; nor a Wendell Phillips to confute him; nor a Daniel Boone to light the far Frontier. We had politicians, and no statesmen; humorists, journalists, literary snobs, but no poets, no true men of letters.

The transplanted parts of Europe, having bloomed for a day, rotted all together. With the century's end, the deliquescence had advanced so far, that the particle was released—the ultimate

[1] Our political sectionalisms are admirably analyzed in Herbert Croly's "Promise of American Life," where also will be found an illuminating study of Lincoln, as a prototype of American statesman not yet realized.

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human atom: the individual, anarchic man, moving alone in a herd through a bewilderment of motions.

He was an atom, a barbarian, because he was truly without contact with a cultural Whole. Politician and pulpiteer mouthed memories for him. But their words appealed to a Body of ideas no longer in existence. The American of the emerging twentieth century was the loneliest man in the world: the world of his fathers had vanished, and no America had been created to replace it.

This American atom (whose ways and means are now to be the object of our study) is an end of Europe. But he is *of* Europe no longer. Europe's running down could issue him only outside of Europe. He is the seed which has fallen to the ground. . . .

WALDO FRANK.

The Reed Racket

THE person who opened the frosty door of Durkin's news butchery was none other than young Dink Hubbell, whom Elmer greeted with a weak pretense of fainting from surprise.

"How come you breeze in here, old thing?" he asked. "Are your tubes all shot or did the battery go Camembert?"

"The set's all right." Dink took a stoveside seat. "I had Washington, D. C., and it was coming in sweet and then everything went blotto. Static, I guess. All I got was howlers."

"That wasn't static, you poor goof. That was Jim Reed crashing into the campaign."

"Well, it sounded like he stripped his gears."

"Sure, that was Jim," said the delighted newsdealer. "He always listens that way. He's like that bird in a poem J. T. Riland knows—his sigh is a hullaballoo and his whisper a horrible yell. Let me shoot you the works on Reed. You'll get a lot of kick out of that old boy."

"What party does he belong to?" asked the refreshingly ignorant young man.

"He's what they call a Condemocrat. Jim's been lamping our Republicans' form of government for sixty-seven years, man and boy, and he uses language on the subject that he never learned at mother's knee. Even if it was good he wouldn't like it.

"This grump grew up in Iowa where a Democrat is lucky to live till Thursday night, and then he wished himself on Kansas City. His disposition was so sour they made him prosecuting attorney, and he was so hot at pinching yeggs, they sent him to the United States Senate.

"He's been strutting his stuff there ever since, squawking about the League of Nations, prohibition, oil thieves and seat buyers. They say he packs such a mean wallop that his little playmates are afraid to bawl him out even when he pulls a raw boner. He's an awful earache to those bunk peddlers and he hates all applesauce except his own make.

"As far as I can crack, he's the only Democrat on the hill who does not choose to be a doormat for the high-hatters who run the works. When things get dopey around the place, this killjoy ankles over and bites his initials on Reed Smoot. The letters, reading from left to right, are 'J. A. R.'—which is fair enough. If it's not Smoot, maybe it's Reed of Pennsylvania. Dave and Jim are first cousins and they are about as chummy as Tom Heflin and the Pope.

"What gives James A. the worst croup is guys buying their way into the Senate. Whenever a sugar daddy blows himself to a lawmaker, Reed does a nosedive into the garbage cart and says: 'How come?' He's from Missouri and he's the world's greatest show-me. He's the bim that eased the props out from under Smith and Vare, and the dirt is that Jim Watson is never himself when Reed opens his trap. Jim Reed's idea of a nice party is delivering a swift kick to some customer who paid a million smackers for his pasteboard.

"This Reed is a natural born deplorer. He's anti-tariff, anti-Volstead, anti-Mellon, anti-Europe and anti-thug. And one of the antiest things he is, is Hoover. That baby has been his favorite pain in the neck all along. The words he has spilled about 'andsome 'Erbert—your mother would wash your mouth with soap for less. If they pin the tin on Hoover in Jim's home burg, Reed would be what Tex Rickard calls 'the logical contender,' and his motto would be 'say it with cauliflowers.'

"You'd think a good G. O. P.-hater like that would be a knockout with his own bunch, but he doesn't hit it off any too well with them either. He was one of those willful willies that cramped Wilson's style so much, and when Woodrow was dolling the world up ritzie and asking the help to kick in free and liberal, all he got from this hard-shelled crab was three rousing sneers. Reed got in Dutch with the neighbors for that and almost lost his driver's license. Four years ago they wouldn't even slip him a ticket to Madison Square Garden, but he staged a comeback and now he's Missouri's favorite son—not counting Slim Lindy.

"So the big noise from K. C. has bought himself a stack and crashed into the game, and the boys are three-sheeting him around and trying to break down sales-resistance. That's all jake with me, because if somebody doesn't pep up this show it will die on its feet. The ballyhoo is that this Smith person hasn't got such a setup as they make out. Al will breeze into Houston with a big gang all right, but he'll never snag the needful two-thirds because he's got too many handicaps in the ring along with his brown derby. Reed thinks the poor old party can stop scrapping about hooch and foreigners and get together on the issue, give the crooks the gate—free trade, free speech and free admis-

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sion to the Senate. Then when Al is stopped and the favorite sons have gone blooey, all the lads will flock over to Little Sunbeam. There's no law against hoping, but somehow I don't see him in there at the pay-off. Al Smith might stub his toe, but if it comes to a dark horse, it's a pipe they'll never pick a bucking bronc."

"Well," said Dink Hubbell, "he sounds like a pretty good egg, at that."

"He is. Especially if you crave 'em hard-boiled. I don't think he's got a Chinaman's chance to cop, but I'd sure like to have the movie rights to the Reed-Hoover sockfest." FELIX RAY.

Washington Notes

AN idea was advanced here the other day, in certain allegedly astute political circles, that this obvious opposition of the so-called "interests" to the candidacy of Herbert, the efficiency marvel, as manifested by the recalcitrant, not to say belligerent, attitude of the smug Mr. Hilles of New York, who is understood to be close to the Morgan firm, and particularly close to Ambassador Morrow, and by the cold, noncommittal position of the august Mr. Mellon—that this opposition is not real at all. The suggestion is made that, knowing Herbert clear to the ground, the "interests" not only have no fear of him, but certainly prefer him to anyone else who could possibly be nominated, that they recognize not only the inevitability but the desirability of his selection, and are deliberately holding off because of the belief that to plump for Herbert now would do him more harm than good.

It is said, for instance, that Mr. Mellon has sapiently decided the thing to do is to permit Herbert to get all the benefit he can from the seeming disapproval of the "interests," to let it appear that New York and Pennsylvania regarded him as a bit too progressive. This, it is argued, will make Herbert more popular as a candidate, will gain for him a support in the West he might otherwise have difficulty in obtaining, will render it easier for such irritating and sturdy fellows as Borah, Norris, La Follette, Brookhart and McMaster to accept him in the convention, after the impossibility of any Corn Belt nomination has been sufficiently demonstrated. In other words, the contention is that the "Big Business" boys really want Hoover, but regard it as smart strategy to appear to have accepted him reluctantly rather than to have picked him.

That is the idea, and it must be conceded it sounds both plausible and intelligent. The fact that it is intelligent is the chief reason I am perfectly certain it is entirely without foundation, though there are plenty of practical persons around Washington who seem to accept it. The fact is, it is altogether too subtle, smart and far-sighted to have been evolved by the gentlemen to whom it is attributed, and who, no matter what they may be in the financial, railroad and industrial fields, are anything but smart, subtle and far-sighted in politics. As a matter of fact, political ingenuity of this sort does not exist except in the inflamed imaginations of near-politicians of the whispering type, and in the fertile brains of the Washington correspondents with spats and morning coats. Much as I revolt against irreverence, I must confess that to me the evidence seems overwhelming that, so far from having any such clear and firm grasp on the situation as this, the sainted Andrew is actually wandering about in a political fog.

I acquit him entirely of any clearly defined political idea at this time of what he wants to do, or even where he is. Moreover, my personal belief is that the old gentleman will not find out where he is until somebody takes him gently by the hand and shows him. With Mr. Mills, his Under-Secretary, and Mr. Lowman, his Prohibition Director, out in the open for Hoover, and with Senator David A. Reed, looked upon as his main reliance in Pennsylvania politics, whispering around the Senate cloak rooms and telling his newspaper friends that Herbert is his friend and he is Herbert's, the natural feeling has been that "Mr. M." himself, as they awesomely refer to him in the Pittsburgh Club, was certainly coming along. No one, for instance, thinks that either Mr. Mills or Mr. Lowman plunged actively into the Hoover fight without first talking the thing over with Mr. Mellon.

On the other hand, I am told that one of the very closest personal friends Mr. Mellon has in Pennsylvania is Mr. W. W. Atterbury, President of the Pennsylvania Railroad, and that Mr. Atterbury is not only very anti-Hoover but very pro-Dawes. Close upon the heels of this report comes the announcement in the Philadelphia papers that Mr. Atterbury is slated, at Mr. Mellon's request, for one of the delegates-at-large to the convention, the others being Mr. Vare, Mr. Reed, Mr. A. W. Mellon and his nephew, W. L. Mellon. It seems to me that Mr. Mellon is in the unhappy position of being pulled in two directions without knowing in which he wants to go. In the end, my belief is, Senator Reed will have more influence with him than the others, and while Senator Reed is understandingly quiet now, by the time the convention meets, his position will be much more clearly defined, and will be much more pronouncedly Hooverish. At least, that is what his friends aver. One reason for this belief is that, before the first of May, he will have been renominated for the Senate, and most of the troubles that have been furrowing his intellectual brow will be over. He can then articulate on political subjects with more ease.

Strange as it may seem, Mr. Vare, like Mr. Reed, has a pronounced Hooverish slant. Perhaps one reason for this is the well known hostility between Mr. Hoover and ex-Governor Gifford Pinchot, who, it will be recalled, has from time to time said things about Mr. Vare not altogether complimentary. He has, in fact, accused him of every known crime on the calendar. It is the belief of some canny observers that, after the April primaries in Pennsylvania, the combined Reed-Vare influence on the Secretary of the Treasury will be sufficient to bring him into the Hoover line-up, not because he particularly wants to, but because there is no place else for him to go. Hard as it will be for his worshipers to believe, the fact is Mr. Mellon is politically dependent, not politically independent at all. Whether Mr. Atterbury is sufficiently hostile to Mr. Hoover to want to take the burden of an anti-Hoover

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fight I do not know, but my judgment is that he is not. Railroad presidents do not like the publicity involved by too open political activity, and Mr. Atterbury could not go far without getting considerable really disagreeable publicity—not, of course, in Pennsylvania, where the journals look upon the president of the Pennsylvania road with reverence, but outside of the state, where they do not.

As to Mr. Hilles and his charming friend, Mr. Morris, it seems to me the explanation of their course is quite simple. They are, in the end, likely to swing their New York delegation to Hoover, largely because there is nowhere else to go, but they quite obviously could hardly let themselves be forced into the Hoover camp by the active, aggressive and unpopular Mr. Mills. Unless Mr. Mills was "set back" in New York, it was perfectly clear that the Hilles-Morris leadership would entirely disappear, and the Under-Secretary of the Treasury would take complete charge. If they wanted to hold their party positions, it was up to Mr. Morris and Mr. Hilles to put Mr. Mills in his place. The only way in which that could be done was by blocking all effort for a Hoover delegation in New York and insuring an uninstructed delegation controlled by Hilles and Morris. This they have done. Mr. Mills has been put in his place, but this does not mean that Herbert will not get the delegation in the end. The whole difficulty with the anti-Hoover people is the absence of any candidate around whom to rally. The impracticability of Dawes is apparent on the record, even if he were not personally distasteful to the noble Calvin, who, while neutral, would hardly be neutral enough to let Dawes be put over on him. The great Herbert asset just now is that there isn't anyone else.

Washington. T. R. B.

The New O'Neill Play

Strange Interlude, by Eugene O'Neill. John Golden Theater, January 30, 1928.

NO shortcomings in "Strange Interlude" as a whole can damp the fact that it is an overwhelming milestone in the American theater. It stretches the range of modern English drama to a wide, rich, new limit, the range in subtlety of motivation and themes, in complexity of feeling, in modernity of subject-matter, in intellectual candor, and in the degree attained of that combination, necessary in good dramatic writing, of typicality and underscoring with particularization and individual creation—I mean the sense of a type that is an individual and an individual in whom the type is implicit and contagious. Such frankness and closeness in feeling, such venturing in poetic inclination and statement, such technical courage and obstinacy, and such a will to force into drama a stronger substance of ideas, a more immediate and necessary thought, has a tremendous significance.

These qualities are all apparent in those first five acts of "Strange Interlude." And to them we must add that curious quality of personal emotion that underlies a work like this of Eugene O'Neill's. It is, first of all, a sense we have of private suffering and impulse; ultimately it has the character of poetry. By this quality there arises, out of his realistic detail, what is by far the most poetic talent in the whole modern English-speaking theater. To this we must add, also, the actability of those first five acts; they hold the attention tightly and almost passionately from start to finish; save for a very few small lapses into the obvious and an incomplete success now and then in the over-difficult—as, for example, in those last few moments, when Nina makes her proposal to the doctor—they are unbroken and compelling. The impression is alive and intense, the statement is lyric, bitter and noble.

The story of this first section of the performance, before the interval for dinner arrives, takes up the life of a girl, Nina Leeds, whose lover, Gordon, has been killed in the War. The professor of dead languages, her father, has taken this lover aside and persuaded him to wait till his return before marrying Nina. She senses this with hatred and resentment, and she is haunted by the fact that she did not give herself to her lover that last night before he went away, so that, at least, she might have possessed him forever in her soul and body, and might, at least, have his child by her now. This grief and loss have turned her into a neurotic. In the end she becomes a nurse in a hospital for disabled soldiers come back from abroad. To them she gives herself, gives herself like a harlot almost, in a sick, mad idea that she can in some way compensate life for what she has done to it in the past through Gordon. Her father dies, she marries Sam Evans, an ineffectual suitor who adores her—this on the advice of her scientific friend, Dr. Darrell, and of Charles Marsden, a friend of all her life, a lover who does not seek her, a slave of his mother, a novelist seduced by his own works.

Nina wants children, she wants to make Sam happy and to learn to love him. A child is to be born. Sam's mother invites the two to her house somewhere up in northern New York State. She tells Nina that she must not let a child be born, there is insanity in Sam's family, though the secret has been kept from him. She advises the young wife to seek happiness as the only good we know. Nina must go out and get some man, otherwise nothing to her, to give her a child. Five months later we see Nina in her small house at the seashore. The abortion has been performed; she does not live with Sam as his wife now, he thinks her ill. There is a scene with Dr. Darrell in which Nina asks him to give her a child, for her own sake, for Gordon's and for Sam's. The latent attraction that Nina and Darrell have for each other begins to appear.

Till this final curtain before the intermission, the play seems to me easily the best work, in any profound sense, that Eugene O'Neill has done, and something in our theater that carries us a long way outward and on. After these acts, the effect is much more unequal. The story proceeds: Nina's child, named by her and Sam for Gordon, her old lover; the love that has arisen between the two upon their entrance into the experiment, their torture, their unwillingness to hurt Sam; the big success, American style, that Sam achieves on the strength he draws from his parenthood and from the supposed devotion of his wife; his puffing out; Darrell's recourse to biology; Nina's weariness of him and love for him; the turning of the son to Sam rather than to his mother, his

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hatred of his own father, his engagement to Madeline, Nina's opposition and refusal to lose him; the decline of the four, Nina, Charlie, Darrell, Sam, into middle age, the subsiding of their passions into a desire for peace; Sam's death, Gordon's departure; Nina's sinking into the last slow rotting by Charlie's side, who, having evaded so much of life, wins now, at length, such a winning as it is, in friendship, peace and old companionship.

There are some fine moments in this second half of "Strange Interlude," especially that where the woman gathers the three men around her, the husband, the lover, the father of her child, three different loves fused into one whole male love that feeds her life and is completed by that fourth man, her son. But as the play winds up, the degree of creation seems less and less, the themes appear interestingly but not always imaginatively or with choice—they are now and again, as a matter of fact, only banal in statement, and sometimes, like the doctor's speech about the atom as he goes out for the last time, just before the final curtain, quite incredible and automatic—instances of those uncreated spots in drama where the characters seem to be doing the business of the idea rather than their own business. In sum—as often happens in Nordic dramas of this general nature—"Strange Interlude," as it develops to its final statement, is cntangled with themes and solemn texts and motivations, and loses much of its earlier thrust and wholeness in creation and dramatic life. The fact of the triumphant first part of "Strange Interlude" remains, however; and the fact of this effort in a tremendous range and depth remains, and is vastly more important to the theater's future than any more nearly perfect but lesser work could be.

As to the widely heralded technical novelties of "Strange Interlude," they are two. One of these is the double length of the play. As to that, the only thing to be said is that such a length is in itself neither good nor bad. It must be justified, of course, by the nature of its content. In "Strange Interlude" it seems to me certain that what is in the play could not be expressed in the usual length of time; the usual two hours, more or less, that a play employs, could not express what is expressed now in this play. On the other hand, "Strange Interlude" as it stands does not seem quite to need this double length.

The other innovation, of which no little has been made in press accounts, consists of a return to the soliloquy, the aside, or whatever you like to call it; it amounts to the dramatic device that allows a character to speak his thoughts aloud without their being heard by any other person on the stage.

Of this usage we may say, in the first place, that we must thank Eugene O'Neill for helping thus to break down the realistic taboo on this dramatic means of expression; it must be clear by now that there are infinite things that the realistic method, sticking to what is actual or possible in the outward surface of life, cannot express, even with the help of the best actor's pantomime. This break with the prose and the self-complacent regulation of the realistic convention in drama has been inherent in Eugene O'Neill's talent from the start.

In the second place we may say that the dramatist's use of this device in "Strange Interlude" varies greatly in its inevitability, and therefore in a genuine artistic success. Sometimes it is merely the old-fashioned aside of melodrama, only half-necessary and saying what could be said in acting. Sometimes it rises to the authentic level of the old poetic dramatists, though now set to fresh uses. It conveys then what could be conveyed in no other way: where the character is alone in the scene, for example, where he has thoughts about the other person that he could not declare, and, most of all, where there are intuitive, Freudian and inmost things that are felt but that in life would never be said before anyone. In this last respect the asides written for the novelist, Charles Marsden, with all his insights, blurred desires, evasions, subtleties, are the most successful. On the whole, the asides are not up to the rest of the play.

Both these technical innovations, however, together with the ideal ambition of the play, its frequent deliberate poetic statement, its complexity and darkness of life and feeling, serve to shake the placid assumptions that the dramatic form, like all forms in art, settles so easily into, and to shame that mere adequate craft and playing the game that the theater as a profession so easily accepts.

Mr. Philip Moeller's direction of "Strange Interlude" seemed to me admirable throughout, both in comprehension of the meanings and in the varying intensity of pitch. Mr. Jo Melziner's first set, the professor's library, was good, the second, in the country home of the Evans', fair; the rest prattled on from the merely passable to the very poor design for the drawing-room on Park Avenue.

With the exception of Mr. Philip Leigh, whose professor creaked and worked much too honestly and hard, all the performances were good enough. Mr. Tom Powers as the novelist—written remarkably—Mr. Glenn Anders, with a good new voice and diction, save for two relapses in the love scenes, as Dr. Darrell, Miss Helen Westley's Mrs. Evans, the mother, and especially Mr. Earl Larrimore's Sam, her son and Nina's husband, were all competent. Miss Lynn Fontanne, in a long part that covered an immense gamut of moods and emotions and situations, a vast, complex, telling role indeed, secured her transitions from dialogue to soliloquy and back again with great skill, and played in general with variety and point, a moving, sincere and often beautiful performance.

STARK YOUNG.

Valentine

It is but seeming. Death cannot bereave,
Nor steal you from my self as from my eyes.
Nothing is changed. Life still is made of lies,
Truth still is but the falsehood men believe.
Fearful and weak, they warp their lives to weave,
From threads of hope, Gargantuan tapestries
To shield them from the deep and artless skies.
We know the stars, and knowing do not grieve.

For long, in the blue heaven of our grace,
When you were quick, we mapped a firmament
And bridged, for our good love, dividing space.
Swift through the starry gulf our senses went,
And dying is not death when in our dream
We marry eyes beyond the silent stream.

ROBERT MCBLAIR.

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CORRESPONDENCE

Congress, Poverty and the Tape-Worm

SIR: May I raise three queries regarding items in your issue of February 1? Two of my queries relate to editorial suggestions; the third to a remark of a contributor.

On page 282 you say that action of the American government toward our neighbors, under the presidential prerogative, "seems to be usually dictated by certain permanent officials in the State Department, and these officials, it is becoming increasingly clear, sometimes get the government, as in Mexico and Nicaragua, into difficulties which many of their fellow countrymen believe to be both unnecessary and dangerous. There is no way of ordering them not to do it, for the prerogative of a President in the conduct of these matters is, and under the American Constitution almost has to be, pretty nearly royal." This may be literally true of the action of the State Department. But do you doubt that Congress could effectively forbid the use of military or naval force by the United States outside its territory, without express sanction by Congress? Could the State Department do much harm without the army or the navy?

On page 286 you say that the technical improvement of American industry, "if continued, offers to the American economic system an opportunity of sufficient productive efficiency to do away with the waste and the suffering of poverty." Do you really believe that productive efficiency, no matter how great, can do away with poverty?

On page 301 Mr. Lewis Mumford says that both Darwin and Wallace derived their doctrine of Natural Selection "from Malthus' theory of . . . a struggle for existence in which the 'fittest' (i. e., the upper classes) survived." My query relates to the implications of the last few words. Did either Malthus or Darwin or Wallace ever use the phrase "survival of the fittest"? Am I mistaken in supposing that it is Herbert Spencer's phrase? And does "fittest," as used by Spencer or by any scientific man who may have followed his usage, mean "the upper classes," or in any sense the best? I understand by it, simply best fitted to survive in a given environment; as a tape-worm, for instance, may be the best fitted to its environment, and hence may be the surviving species.

Ithaca, New York. CHARLES E. EDGERTON.

Mr. Stein and Mr. Frank

SIR: Mr. Waldo Frank, in his reply to my letter—both published in the New Republic of January 4—most convincingly illustrates my contention that "philosophers" do not understand each other. Mr. Frank claims to be intelligent, and he has at times admitted that I am intelligent. Yet he has not the vaguest notion of my meaning, or he would not say that "the real part, he thinks, is that which falls within the field of descriptive science," despite my elaborate presentation of a contrary view. I cannot even imagine, with any assurance, what Mr. Frank has in mind. He seems to say that one cannot accept being alive without a metaphysics, as though metaphysics was a state of being rather than a doctrine. It sounds like nonsense to me, and I attribute this kind of facile belief to Mr. Frank's impatience of analysis, and to his clamorous demand for quick and easy soul-satisfying results. But Mr. Frank thinks that his criticisms are results of his greater profundity of insight. He thinks that I am superficial, whereas I think that he never gets further than rewording conventional commonplaces, often quite meaningless, and retailing familiar knowledge with a great show of erudition. He believes that I am a shallow thinker, and I do not regard him as a thinker at all, but as a popularizer of rather futile and shopworn thought. It is possible that one of us is right in his opinion of the other, and it is also possible that each thinks in terms that to the other are meaningless. In any case, no evidence has been offered to convince one that the other understands him. I think that Mr. Frank, in his reply to my letter, evades the real issues, and merely twaddles. He doubtless thinks that he is cogent. I find mere verbiage where he believes that he has put sense. And there we are. Mr. Frank says that he is sick and tired of the modern pose that philosophy is unintelligible. I don't know what he will do in the present instance, but probably the usual thing. He will doubtless conclude that I cannot understand him, but that he can understand me.

Paris, France. LEO STEIN.

Columbus Was a Sailor

SIR: Your comment upon President Coolidge's panegyric on Columbus suggested Ruben Darío's poem on the same subject This distinguished Nicaraguan, whose influence upon Spanish literature was as great as that of any writer of his generation, seems to have felt differently about the Great Admiral's achievement He said:

Pluguiera á Dios las aguas, antes intactas
no reflejaran nunca las blancas velas;
ni vieran las estrellas stupefactas
arribar á la orilla tus carabelas!

Cristóforo Columbo, pobre Almirante!
ruega á Dios por el mundo que descubriste!

Which, robbed of its music and much of its suggestive imagery might be rendered:

Would to God that the waters, till then untroubled,
had never mirrored those white sails;
nor the astounded stars beheld
the beaching of your caravels upon this strand.

Christopher Columbus, poor admiral,
pray to God for the world that you discovered.

Though Darío had well formed opinions upon the foreign relations of his country as he knew them (he died in 1916), these lines have no reference to the United States. I quote them merely to suggest that our Latin-American neighbors do not always see things with the roseate vision of our complacent spokesman.

St. Petersburg, Florida. J. P. MCGONIGAL.

"A Financial Path to Peace"

SIR: Will you permit the "voice of God" (which Blake says is the "voice of honest indignation") to utter a word in your columns? In the language of that old Lion of Liberty, the elder Pitt, "I am willing to be taken for an idiot" if Mr. Levinson's "Financial Path to Peace" is not an infallible prescription for more wars. The United States boasts that it won the War, that is, prevented Germany from winning it. If this be true, then all the reparations wrung out of Germany ought to be paid by the United States. This is strictly according to canon, that those should pay who are best able to pay. Surely all history contradicts the doctrine that you can lead the world to peace by mortgaging unborn generations to pay an unjust claim.

May I add there is not an ounce of German blood in my veins My father was killed at the head of his regiment at Kenesaw Mountain.

Canton, Pennsylvania. JOHN BASIL BARNHILL.

Pastry Cooks, Unite!

SIR: In your recent issue, Silas Bent belabors the newspapers for printing more about the Ruth Snyder maneuver than about Thomas Hardy's death. Fine! Now let's get after the restaurants for selling more pastry than spinach.

Lansing, Michigan. DONALD MCGOWAN.

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Philosophy as a Fine Art

The Realm of Essence, by George Santayana. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 183 pages. $3.50.

PHILOSOPHY has its local veers and temporal swerves, but it returns from its oscillations to the central question of the relation of existence and ideas, matter and mind, nature and spirit. The vein of positivism and phenomenalism seems to be temporarily worked out. Contemporary philosophy shows a marked disposition to invade the field which much nineteenth-century thought contemptuously dismissed as "ontological"; it manifests a marked tendency to revert to the issues of Greek and medieval speculation and to inquire into the intrinsic nature of matter and mind, nature and spirit, and their relations with one another. For the first time, after many a long year, there is high discourse of Being and Essence. Among those who engage in this discourse, George Santayana is a conspicuous figure.

In "The Life of Reason," which established him as one whose thought is to be reckoned with, he spoke primarily as a moralist and as an historian (in terms of what he has since called "literary psychology") of the emergence of the rational life out of the flux of blind sensation and desire. In that work, he taught or seemed to teach that the realm of ideas and ideals is rooted in nature and forms its apex: a flower of nature destined, indeed, never to bear seeds which may themselves take root in nature, but altogether lovely, the end of experience and of human life, in the only intelligible sense of end. It now appears, however, that those who interpreted Santayana in this sense of naturalistic idealism were in error. They took his dramatic reproduction of the course of human history in arriving at a knowledge of ideas and ideals as if it were an account of the generation of those ideals themselves. Following his volume on "Skepticism and Animal Faith," which was introductory, Mr. Santayana is now putting forth his positive and, so to say, constructive metaphysics—to which, however, he prefers to give the name ontology. "The Realm of Essence" is the first phase of the wider realm of Being to receive attention.

His fundamental position may, I think, be simply stated without doing it an injustice. His philosophic creed is a variant of an old saying: Render to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's and to God the things that are God's. In his thorough-going dualism, the version reads: Render to Essence the things which belong to it and to Nature, or existence or matter or substance (the four terms are equivalents), the things which belong to it. All existence is natural, physical as well as psychical, and Matter is the substance of Nature. The latter is a flux, enduring and contingent, having in itself no character or even characters, much less purpose. Over against the realm of existence stands that of Being, consisting of essences which *are* but which do not *exist,* while existences, since they are in ceaseless change, in flux, are not; they are rather what Plato termed non-Being. Since essences do not exist, they are to be described in terms which are mainly those of negation of the properties ascribed to existence: non-material, eternal (that is, in the sense of non-temporal, not in that of everlasting existence), spaceless, the heaven of Platonic Ideas, the world of Leibnizian possibilities out of which some few are selected for inclusion within existence. These essences are each complete and independent in themselves, wholly individual and yet wholly universal—not general—and they are infinitely numerous.

They are the objects of intuition rather than of proof or reflection. For all thinking, and sense as well, presupposes them as its already intuited objects. Their Being and concrete reality may, however, be indicated by various modes of approach, of which the skeptical, showing that existence as such cannot be sensed or known, is one. There are, however, other roads to a realization that as objects of intuition they are already contained in not only every form of knowledge, but in every form of significant experience. There is the road of dialectic, which is either a construction or an analysis of ideal forms tracing the logical patterns assumed by them. These are the objects and the only objects of *exact* science, of mathematics and logic, while the goal of the natural sciences is to trace these patterns as they are actually exemplified in the flux of nature. They are approached in contemplation, especially in the contemplation of sense. Whenever sense ceases to be worried about its objects in their practical or intellectual implications, it becomes contemplative. The most material thing felt to be beautiful is sublimated into essence; the natural affinity of mind is to essence, not to fact, which is of concern only because the body, in order to preserve itself, has to act and to adapt itself practically and existentially to other existences. The proper affinity of mind to essence, rather than to action and fact, is revealed in the beginning of life in play and at its end in contemplation. The other road mentioned is that of spiritual discipline; the liberation of man from absorption in care for the material and his elevation into regard for the eternal in all its indifferency to his worldly fortunes.

The realm of essence is indifferent and inert; it has no potency nor desire to find a home in existence. But the flux of existence, which alone has power and causality, happens to take on and cast off some of the essences. Thereby it attains determinate characters, and in such ways that man, himself a special part of the flux, may, when made shrewd by experience, read determinate courses of events, and pass in inference from one character of existence to another. Such instances of embodied or exemplified essences define the nature of all knowledge of existence, that of common sense, that of physical science as well, but such knowledge represents a concession which mind makes to the exigent conditions of its own existence rather than expresses its proper nature. When such accommodation to the necessities of existence and to the needs of action is treated seriously and made an end or value of life, mind is prostituted. The true attitude toward nature is that of piety, of deferential respect as to a mother, of good-humored acceptance which appreciates the comedy involved in the absurdity of confining essence within existence, while it is recognized that that very absurdity frees man from any obligation to achieve such incarnation and liberates him for the blessed opportunity of contemplative enjoyment of essence. When the mind engages in this, its true office, spirituality is found. Piety to nature is a necessity, since we cannot escape nature as long as we exist, and it is a debt of gratitude as well; for it is due to the favoring grace of nature that the power of thought and intuition exists. Deference to nature having been courteously paid, mind is liberated to dwell in its true home, the eternal. This is the core of meaning in all religions, however burdened they may be with the superstitious legends about existence; of all morality above the merely prudential, and of all fine art.

I have been obliged to omit many things that students of philosophy will find highly interesting—some of them, perhaps, the most instructive things in the volume. But I

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have not, I hope, omitted anything essential to the framework of his position, although the captivating qualities of his expression have, alas, evaporated: its lucidity, its union of austerity with charm, its urbanity—in this volume one of form as well as of substance, so that some readers will perhaps miss the touches of malice which have spiced most of his writings. Criticism finds itself in an almost hopeless dilemma. Mr. Santayana habitually employs "dogmatic" as a term of honor. There is perhaps no thinker, certainly no contemporary one, who is so assured, so free from intellectual doubts as he is. Doubts and questionings are as foreign to the spirit of his philosophy as they are irrelevant to the contemplation of essence and the enjoyment of music. Intuition is, he tells us, "absolute apprehension, without media or doubt." Mr. Santayana has such an intuition of his own system, and his ultimate reply to anyone who cannot achieve a similar intuition might well be: So much the worse for you. Yet philosophy is reflection rather than music or poetry, albeit it is fortunate, when it finds a poet like Mr. Santayana to expound it. It is, therefore, supposed to fall within the realm of the true or false, and as such has to submit, as music has not, to certain criteria of material evidence and internal coherence. A dream is sometimes a lovely object of contemplation; man is a fantasy-making animal and the contents of a fantasy are, by Santayana's definition, essences. As philosophy, Mr. Santayana's philosophy, therefore, demands trial by raising questions of matter-of-fact evidence and of internal logical consistency from which as a poem or musical symphony it is exempt, and to him as a thinker it is discourtesy not to raise problems having their source in doubt.

Yet, from the standpoint of Mr. Santayana's own definition of truth, the critic now finds himself in another dilemma. The realm of truth for him is that "segment of that realm of essence which happens to be illustrated in the realm of existence." Yet that part of his system with which he is most concerned, and upon which his whole distinction of naturalism from spirituality turns, is precisely essence which is not, save accidentally, exemplified in existence. Mr. Santayana thus seems to have deprived both himself and a critic of any criterion by which to judge of the truth of his system. Technical criticism would, perhaps, proceed both most justly and most sympathetically by tracing the historic forbears of his doctrines. For even if the genetic method is as irrelevant to ulterior problems as Mr. Santayana's dislike of it holds it to be, yet it is still relevant to human opinions about these ulterior matters. So viewed, his system seems to present a version of the Platonic idea in terms of the Lockeian simple idea—a combination which at once arouses doubt as to the consistency of its components. For while Santayana's assertion, that essence is the direct and indubitable object of every kind of awareness, follows from the definition of idea in Locke as the "immediate object of the mind in thinking" (where thinking covers all which the modern psychologist calls "consciousness"), nothing could be more remote from the stern discipline which in Plato is required in order to turn the eye of the soul to the vision of ideas. I fear that Santayana has made more concessions to the temper of a democratic and easy-going age than he can theoretically approve.

Again, one might point out that the flux, which is, by conception, the great distinction of existence from Being, is by definition unknowable, either by sense or thought. It is an easy transition to the conclusion that the existential flux is itself a pure essence and not an existence nor a trait of existence. This conclusion seems trivially dialectical. But followed out, it might lead us to the conclusion that, since existence has order and relations, and is not mere flux, essences are but relations and relational operations extracted from natural existence, which after being sublimated in thought into essences, are restored to an existence from which they were never really separated. For it would be no great task for a thorough-going naturalist to derive every trait of Santayana's essence from the characteristics of any object of thought, as thought deals with nature. The task is made easy by the fact that Santayana himself, in denying all potency to essence, is obliged to ascribe intent and communication to the natural world.

A critic, however, would probably be better advised to trace the consequences of that part of Santayana's doctrine in which he distinguishes between essences as directly possessed in intuition and essences as only intended or implicated. The nature of the former phase of experience is conveyed by him when he says: "The torments suffered by the souls in Dante's Inferno are not intuited by the poet or the reader in their intended essence, for then he would be enduring these torments actually." For if this strain be developed, it would appear that not only is sense an organ of apprehension of essence but is its only organ, understanding by "sense" not the desiccated "sensations" of analytic psychology but direct and pregnant realization, in which emotion is also contained. Such direct appreciation is possible only of essences or meanings incarnate in matter or natural existence; the "essences" with which thought deals as matters of intent and implication are not had nor intuited. They have their import in an ulterior intent to realize them in nature. Save as instruments facilitating and directing such embodiment, they are but symbols to be symbolically manipulated: remote, pallid, abstract.

Conceived in terms of this strain of Santayana's philosophy, the realm of essences is but the device of thought for projecting possibilities as yet unrealized in nature; their intellectual status, the question of whether they are fantasies or genuine ideas, is decided by their fitness to direct action in effecting an embodied realization. Such action defines the procedure and aim of art and the arts. The act of art, or incarnation in existence, is thus part of the intent of thought in dealing with "essence." Action stands on the same level as the objects of thought, being but the manifestation of the intent of reference to existence which constitutes them. Essences of the Platonic type are as instrumental as is action itself; they are means of a delayed but potential transformation of natural existence such that it will be enriched by meanings capable of direct yet rational enjoyment. A similar outcome is indicated by the analogies which Santayana frequently draws between the realm of essences and music. For music is the antithesis of essence isolated from existence in sense and nature.

It thus appears that, of the four approaches to genuine and final essence, but one, that of sense, is complete and adequate. The others are preliminary and instrumental, preparing the antecedent machinery which is indispensable to a rich and vital appreciation of the realized potentialities of nature. Which is to say that *they* are *not* essences but means of approach to natural existence alone possessed of essential, that is, final and self-sufficing, quality.

Were the foregoing suggestions adequately developed, it would appear, I think, that one may use the dilemma previously mentioned in order to engage in an examination of Santayana's system from two points of view. One may take his doctrine as an intellectual system having historic

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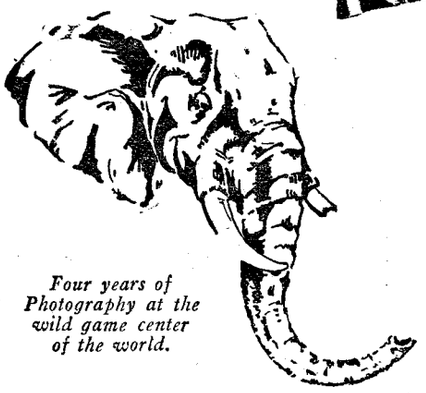

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forbears in the various systems which have anticipated him in statement of the two-world scheme of separate essence and existence. From this point of view, his doctrine is characterized by all the unresolved problems and contradictions which have afflicted these historic systems, plus added ones which are revealed because of his more consistent and austerely precise development of implications. From this point of view, I shall be surprised if the ultimate fate of the doctrine is not to effect a *reductio ad absurdum* of the common premises. But one may also take a more genial path and, setting out from the kinship of enjoyed possession of essence with appreciation of works of art, be led to interpret the doctrine in the sense of cancellation of the alleged separation of objects of thought from nature. The conclusion is that thought and its characteristic objects are, like bare action or practice, but a means for a transformation of raw nature into products of art—into forms of existence which are directly significant and enjoyed. Meanwhile, the works of art created by Mr. Santayana afford so much enjoyment of a high order in their embodiment of observation and reflection, that the reader is well advised who emulates Mr. Santayana in abrogation of doubt and question, and surrenders himself to their enjoyment. For in the end, it is only the wisdom which is embodied in natural existence which counts, and the technical wisdom of the ontological and dialectical philosopher of itself drops away. The affinity of mind to pure essence is disciplinary and preparatory; that intermediate and instrumental affinity once having been developed, mind turns spontaneously to its proper object, meaning realized by art in natural existence.

JOHN DEWEY.

A World Republic

Olives of Endless Age: Being a study of this distracted world and its need of unity, by Henry Noel Brailsford. New York: Harper and Brothers. 431 pages. $3.50.

MR. BRAILSFORD'S brilliant essay—in spite of its poetic, rather blind title—is a closely reasoned, daring program of world politics in the way he thinks we shall have to go. Refusing the alternative of patching the fabric of international adjustment, he goes straight for a comprehensive solution by the creation of a world republic. The League of Nations, now inadequate, is to be made effective with police power and economic control.

In opening his substantive case, Mr. Brailsford is moderate about such moot questions as war guilt. He believes the world has lost faith in the principle by which it is now organized—force. The Versailles juggling, he thinks, may have been futile in securing economic advantages, but the motives were shameless, whether the theories were good or bad. And nothing has been settled. The League of Nations, the instrument left by the War "to clear up the mess," has not applied its efforts to the fundamental issues which brought the War upon us. It has not liberated the "little nationalities," and it has "never dreamed of surveying the world's needs and resources of iron ore, or of any other of these highly political raw materials, and still less has it attempted, by any device whatever, to assure a supply to those who need it."

This unsatisfactory League has brought us benefits in social and humanitarian services, and by investigating economic facts. If the League develops, Mr. Brailsford hopes that "it can perform the civilizing work of Imperialism, without its threat to freedom." The one instrument which the League has for purposes both humanitarian and political is publicity. The author seems to underestimate the power of publicity as a weapon in the hands of a skillful and devoted Secretariat, or when used by an outraged League member; but, as he says, legislation must come later.

From his description of "this distracted world" and its only institution for international control, he proceeds to discuss the armaments which enforce economic advantage, arguing that they must be made international instead of being abolished. He has us in his logical trap. If the League, our only hope, is ineffectual because it cannot control the economic and military individualism of the powers, the united populations of all countries, detached from their nationalistic selves, must transfer to the League all economic and military prerogatives. They can then be controlled through the League's representative legislature. National sovereignty vanishes in the shuffle.

Mr. Brailsford is well aware that he is offering bitter doctrine when he says "in the modern economic world, nationalism is the enemy of civilization; it has its legitimate work only as the guardian of inherited culture." But he wastes no time trying to sugar-coat it. He lists progressive steps toward world democracy. We must abolish the right of waging private war by general treaties. The League should take control, under a stiffened mandate system, of all colonies and of all states which cannot or do not govern themselves. National states must cease to advance the foreign trade of their citizens, leaving commercial rights to the protection of international courts. International organization must control raw materials. The League must aid backward states and protect racial minorities. Large federal groupings within the League will then become possible, and an international police force will supplant private state armaments. Finally, there must be a world legislature, with proportional representation of all populations.

There is no other path for us to choose which will lead to anything but worse anarchy, and up this path we are being pushed by the internationalization of industry and finance.

Mr. Brailsford's argument, presented here in crude skeleton, will not strike all readers as solid at every point. There is, for example, the very grave question as to whether a recklessly breeding national group has any "national right" to expand into the territory of another which would be recognized by a just international court. Cultural and political controls cannot be easily disentangled, and there may be residual justifications for national sovereignty when the systems of production and distribution have been completely generalized. But, in spite of such objections, the argument is too cogent and too important to be judged by anything but its virtues.

Taken merely as a book—and it is a tribute to the author's thought to acknowledge that this is trivial—"Olives of Endless Age" is a handsome volume, marred by occasional misprints and a regrettable uncertainty in the spelling of proper names. The introduction, a fable of a modern Candide, is self-indulgence. Mr. Brailsford's irony is sharp and is used frequently in the substantive structure to speed home a necessary point. Candide could be left without great loss to less practical essays.

Mr. Brailsford is practical above everything. He has thrown overboard a lot of dreary baggage, prejudices, myths and hesitations. He wants clean and noble thinking about the future of mankind, and has offered a stimulating example. Many able books have specified our troubles. I know of no other which has gone so far in this present crisis in laying down a program worth serious consideration.

LYMAN BRYSON.

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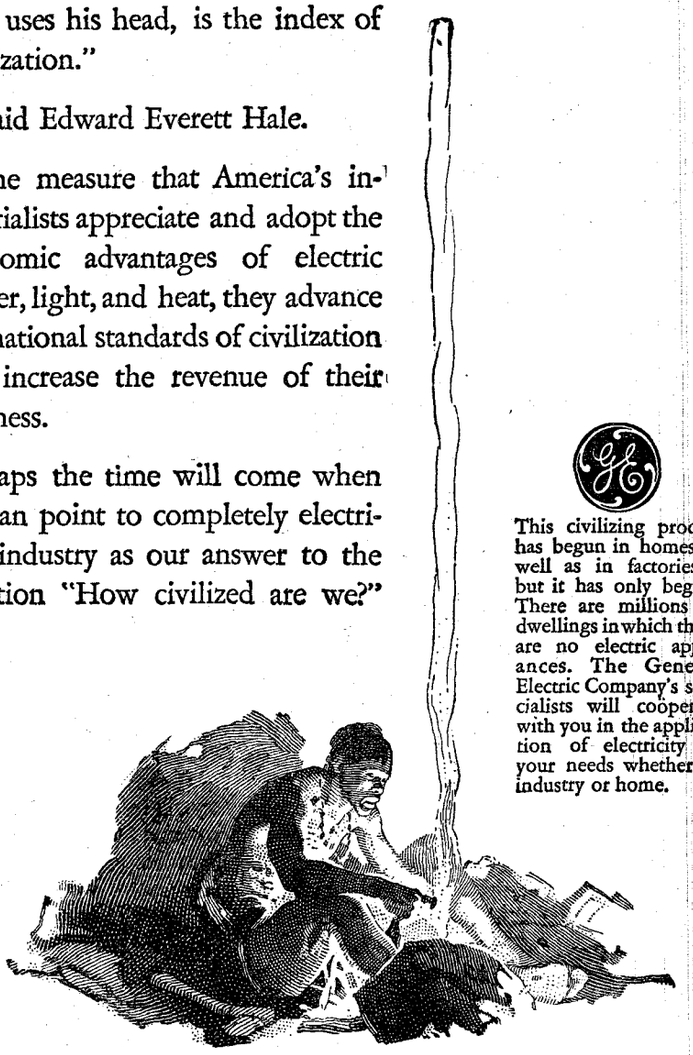

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The Tall Men

The Tall Men, by Donald Davidson. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company. 117 pages. $2.

THIS poem of epic length is not an epic; it is the "portrait of a Tennessean"—the map of his character, the atlas in which his memories and those of his race are charted with precision. It begins with the coming of tall hunters, "whose words were bullets," whose feet were "firm in moccasins after the Indian fashion," to the waters of Tennessee. It chronicles their wars against the Indians and against the Yankees. It speaks less successfully of another war, in which the tall mountaineers and the Yankees fought in identical uniforms. Then, returning to the Tennessean of 1927, it describes his search for a philosophy among the ruins of his past. . . . The meter of this distinguished poem is a sort of limber-legged pentameter, with amazing cæsuras and extra syllables where they are least expected—a blank verse similar to that of Webster and Ford, loose, dramatic, flexible like theirs, and admirably suited to the emotions of the age in which we live.

M. C.

Sparks of Tragedy

The Chronicles of Clovis, by Saki (H. H. Munro). New York: The Viking Press. $1.50.

The Unbearable Bassington, by Saki (H. H. Munro). New York: The Viking Press. $1.50.

THE works of "Saki" (H. H. Munro), now being published for the first time in this country, with introductions by famous English writers, recall a literary tradition that, despite its nearness in time, seems strangely remote. We hear much of "post-war disillusion" in the work of contemporary writers—with this writer who, simply because of his death in the War, is not a contemporary, we return to pre-war disillusion, a weary cynicism that the term *"fin-de-siècle"* cannot be stretched to cover. It is as hard to be consistently deterministic about disillusionment as about happiness. Humanity proceeds from the horrors of war to the blessings of peace and back again, but the succession of disillusionists is unbroken. Only the manner of asseverating that all *is* vanity has changed since Ecclesiastes was written. Conditions and circumstances have modified the manner to the extent that "period" is recognizable, but the emotional fabric of cynicism remains the same through ages of "progress." Munro's disgust for life is along pre-war lines as unmistakably as a costume of the year 1905. Its conversational trimmings twinkle like the "bugles" of an even earlier mode, its slender forms are laced and hobbled into distorted and fantastic outlines. But it is effective, often "stunning"—artificial, crisp, and startling into irrepressible amusement only subsequently realized as bitter. The dialogue is reminiscent of Wilde's—malicious and brittle, while what emotional content there is, is tinged with a sadism that recalls the French Decadents. This appears sporadically in the sprightly Chronicles of the precocious and perverse Clovis, and in more aggravated form throughout "The Unbearable Bassington"—a well-nigh unbearable account of hopeless discordance and vexation of spirit between mother and son. The surface sparkle of this novel is thinner than the protective hilarity of Clovis over the despair one feels beneath both.

"Saki" is always a troubling, often a tragic wit. His glitter of malice, when one is close to feeling it hateful, turns somehow pitiable. His flights of rockets provoke reflexes of surprised laughter, dying as the dazzle fades out against a darkness the blacker for its sudden flare. His festive fires, so recklessly lighted, are seen to be *auto-da-fès* with himself as victim. For the subjective significance in "Saki's" work is distressingly apparent. One cannot but feel that here is one of the unhappiest young men ever born. Into his eye must have flown one of the fragments of the Dwarf's Mirror in Andersen's tale, so that he saw all things, all values and all relations cruelly and ridiculously distorted. In the fairy tale only tears shed in unselfish pity could wash out the shining splinter—but, by an appropriately malicious circumstance, the pity aroused by "Saki" is felt not through him, but for him. Tragedy is present in his work—mocking and hopeless, but is sensed most acutely as tragedy *behind* the mockery and scorn—in the unknown life ended so untimely in the most tragic mockery of our epoch.

D. B. WOOLSEY.

A Yankee Passional, by Samuel Ornitz. New York: Boni and Liveright. $2.50.

THIS second novel by Samuel Ornitz is of a type which one meets rather infrequently and which is invariably difficult to appraise. Mighty in scale yet extremely chaotic in effect, it is a book which one cannot dismiss lightly although its imperfections cry to heaven. Daniel Matthews, a baffled and tormented mystic, comes from a small town to that rowdy underworld represented by the New York Bowery of the nineties. He attempts to find peace in a passionate and liberal Catholicism, and dedicates himself to an ascetic God, but he is continually torn by his fleshly desire for the wife of a swaggering, fraudulent health doctor and by the cynical wisdom of a drunken Irishman, Liam O'Hegerty, who is by all odds the most successful character in the book. Daniel's friends are Irishmen and Jews, ward heelers, journalists, prostitutes, crooks, and priests. In the strange, confused drama which they play, religion, politics, and the Irish question are the principal themes. Not only the subject matter, but the brutal nightmare quality of the book remind one often of "Ulysses," and Mr. Ornitz duplicates in addition certain distinctive traits of Joyce's style, such as the running together of words. Like "Ulysses," too, it is by no means easy to read, and one would feel better repaid for the effort if the central character claimed more of one's interest and did not seem at times like a neurotic weakling who partially deserved his martyrdom. Mr. Ornitz has apparently tackled a theme, or rather a variety of themes, beyond his powers. His novel will probably be a disappointment to admirers of "Haunch, Paunch and Jowl." And yet, when all is said, he manages to make most of the current novels seem thin, superficial and emasculated.

E. H. W.

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